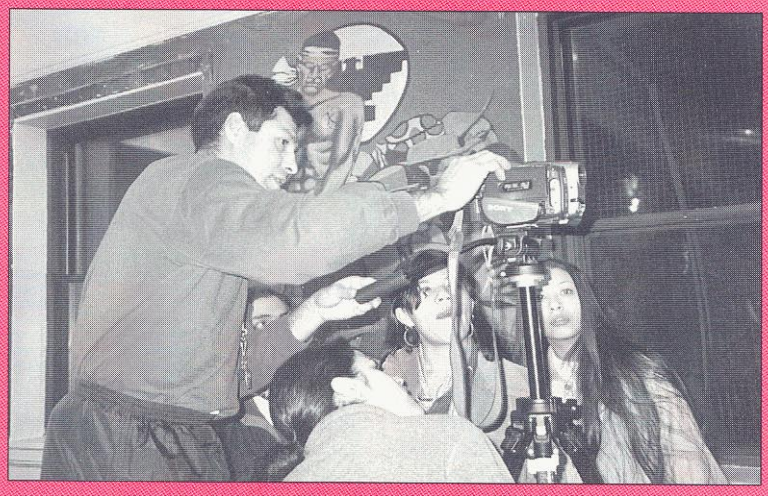
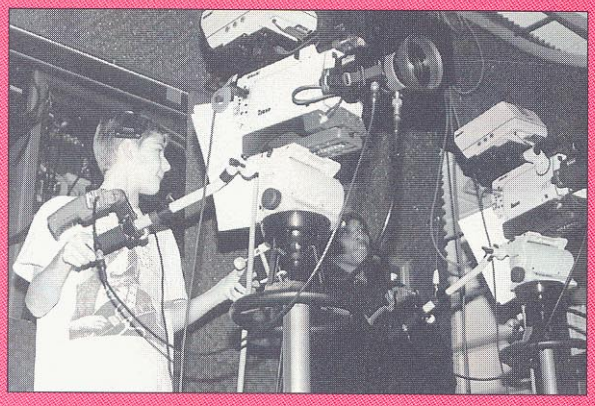
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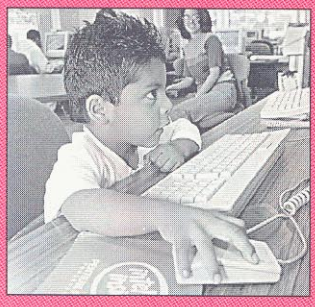












COMMUNITY MEDIA IN ACTION

The Journal of the Alliance for Community Media • Volume 21, No. 3

An Invitation to Join the

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For the past 10 years, the Alliance for Communications Democracy has been fighting to preserve and strengthen access. Though the odds against us have been high, and the mega-media, corporate foes well-heeled and powerful, time and again we've won in the courts. We can't continue this critical work without your support. With the ramifications of the 1996 Telecommunications Act only now beginning to manifest themselves, we must be vigilant if we are to prevail and preserve democratic communications. If not us, who? If not now, when? Please join the Alliance for Communications Democracy today!

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As the journal of the Alliance for Community Media, Community Media Review *shall support the Alliance mission by providing: a comprehensive overview of past, present and future issues critical to the Alliance and its membership; vigorous and thoughtful debate on those issues; and a venue for members and like-minded groups to present issues critical to the Alliance.*

Community Media More than Sound Bites

by Bunnie Riedel
Executive Director,
Alliance for Community Media

One of the biggest challenges I've encountered in organizing movements and running nonprofits has been doing public relations and message delivery on a shoe-string budget.

Typically, nonprofits (especially smaller non-profits) do not have the money to run effective public relations campaigns either on a national or local scale. Often they have to depend on extraordinary events or even create stories in order to get free press. This makes the nonprofit dependent on the media to notice them and deliver their message correctly, rather than empowering the non-profit to decide when and how their messages will be delivered. Public relations for many nonprofits becomes a game of chance rather than the predictable science that it really is and it leaves non-profits vulnerable to others' interpretations of their mission.

When a nonprofit is primarily reliant on free press, that press is usually centered around a controversy of some sort. A great deal of press can be garnered when legislation or litigation is involved, whether positive or negative. "Press Bumps," as I like to call them, come unexpectedly and position the organization as adversarial or defensive. One of my favorite tricks is to keep a constant eye on the competitor or adversary of an organization and then try to do my best to steal their thunder by pre-empting their story or even physically attending their press conferences and handing out my counter story. I found out years ago that any organization can get equal airtime just by showing up because the press loves to report controversy.

But controversial public relations does not educate the public about difficult or complicated issues, it just gets an organization's name in the paper and sometimes that can backfire into a negative story which makes the nonprofit look bad. Additionally, hot news stories rely on "sound bites" not dialogue and sound bites cannot do justice to what are frequently complex and multi-layered pieces of information.

'Of all the community service we do, this outreach to nonprofits may be one of the most important. Nonprofit organizations usually exist to meet the needs of people and when we assist nonprofits we are connecting their services with the people who need them, and therefore, we are meeting community needs."



Added to that, the media has to have a hook to hang their story on. For the most part, main stream media must be commercially viable and that has come to mean titillating. In an effort to present the "man bites dog" story that will interest the press, many nonprofits find themselves creating programming they believe will be commercially saleable. I've seen organizations spend programming time and money to release "special reports" to capture press attention or stage rallies to get camera time. That is good and well as long as it doesn't come at the expense of real missional programming, but sadly it frequently does.

More disturbing than having to short-cut programming or ride the controversy wave is what happens to nonprofits when their issues are no longer "popular" with the public. About a month after I became Executive Director of the Alliance I went to speak to a group of state coordinators for the National Campaign of Families of POWs and MIAs. I told the gathering of about 25 women (mostly mothers of POWs and MIAs) how they could use access to get their message out and keep it before the public. They let me know that there are still over 2,700 men and women missing at this time. Yet, as one woman said, "We're not a story anymore." It was an experience that moved and angered me. I was moved by the women I met and angered that the media had decided that 2,700 missing American citizens were not worth reporting on.

So what's a nonprofit with few PR dollars and a disinterested media to do? If you're in access you already know the answer. Unlike most other non-profits or social justice movements we have media, our challenge is reaching out to nonprofits and teaching them how to use what we have.

Of all the community service we do, this outreach to nonprofits may be one of the most important. Nonprofit organizations usually exist to meet the needs of people and when we assist nonprofits we are connecting their services with the people who need them, and therefore, we are meeting community needs.

I am proud to be part of a media that doesn't search for the sensational or is so commercially driven that everything becomes a "sound bite." Access allows thoughtful discourse on issues affecting the community and is able to deliver information which enhances the quality of lives. We accomplish our mission every time we help nonprofit organizations (big or small, local or national) communicate their mission!

1999 Alliance for Community Media International Conference & Trade Show in Cincinnati, Ohio July 7-10

We can't wait to see you in Cincinnati!! The local planning committee is putting together a package of events and workshops that will surely educate, if not enchant you. At the center of most of our activities will be the conference site itself — the classic art deco hotel, the Omni Netherland Plaza. Built in the 1930s we're sure you'll find its architectural richness a beautiful backdrop to conference events. Plus it has a great central bar and live music. The Omni is right in the heart of downtown Cincinnati adjacent to a shopping center and near the Contemporary Art Museum, the Aronoff Center for Performance Art, the Taft Museum and other area dining and dancing establishments.

Building bridges to each other in the next century / Cincinnati, USA

The first event of the conference will be an International Reception on Wednesday July 10 at the nearby Aronoff Center. The purpose of the evening will be to welcome our international guests, showcase their work, and have some food and drink. We are expecting guests from many countries, including Brazil, France, India, Ireland, Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. For now we are planning an informal show meaning three monitors will be set up offering guests the opportunity to wander from station to station to view international productions.

There is still plenty of opportunity to host an international guest. If your center would like to sponsor a guest for the Cincinnati conference (paying their airfare and hotel) the national office will comp their registration. Our goal is to have a minimum of 20 international guests. Put it in your budget today and contact me at (513) 651-4171. It will cost about $1500 per person.

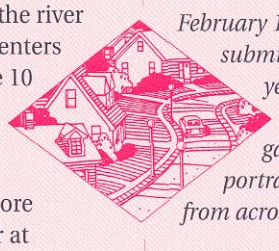
Thursday will be the Hometown Awards at the Hall of Mirrors in the Omni. Wear your access best, dancing will follow immediately. We're working on keeping the event as tightly produced as poss ble, but giving all winners the chance to be recognized before the crowd.

Friday is the Central States Gorilla Party at the Cincinnati Zoo. Those conference participants who have produced (as part of a pre-conference workshop) their "Three Minutes In Cincinnati" tapes, will find their work on display. It will be an evening of animal fun with guests invited to tour the grounds, animal caretakers presenting various wildlife, a dinner, a band, and, of course, dancing! Enjoy the evening and bring the family. We will bus you from downtown to the zoo, which is about a 10 minute ride.

Conference workshops will feature tracks for government, education and public access. Tentative track discussions include offering workshops on Community Computing/Multi-Media, Public Policy, Media Literacy, Educational Access, Government Access, New Technology, Access Center Operations, The ACM/Organiza-tional Development, Producers, and Volunteers.

We will have a trade show, a video artist, an access center map featuring access centers from the U.S. and around the world, a special breakfast orientation for new people learning about the Alliance and much more. We've gotten some great sponsors so all the activities described will be reasonably priced.

Please come early and stay long. See a baseball game. Take a cruise on the river and enjoy the wealth of access centers in this Tri-state region. There are 10 in the Cincinnati area alone. The surrounding environs include even more. See you in Cincinnati July 7-10 1999. For more information contact Joyce Miller at (513)651-4171 or ccv1@iac.net.



Conference Notes

Plan Ahead

Tucson, Washington, DC, and Houston will be the locations in 2000, 2001 and 2002 of future Alliance for Community Media international conferences. The Tucson conference will be held at the Westin La Paloma, while sites are still to be named in Washington, DC and Houston.

Trade Show Returns

The Alliance is reviving its trade show at this year's conference. It's an ideal opportunity for vendors to showcase their products before an eager audience of nearly 1,000 media activists. For information on securing display space, contact Bunnie Riedel at the national office at 202.393.2650, or email at briedel@alliancecm.org

Scholarship Fund

The national board has established a fund to provide scholarships for grassroots members beginning with the Tucson conference. A slight surcharge will be added to conference registrations, which will then be disbursed to the Alliance regions to award the scholarships. For more information, contact Karen Toering at karent349@aol.com.

Deadline

February 19 is the deadline for submitting entries to this year's Hometown Video Festival. The annual gala conference event portrays the best of access from across the country.

Surmounting Undulations through Mutual Effort

by Rob Brading

Alliance Chairman and Executive Director of Multnomah Community TV

Nepali undulations. I recently returned from a months trip to Nepal where I spent three weeks trekking the Himalayas. A lot of that time was spent toiling up and down (sometimes the down was worse that the up) Nepali undulations.

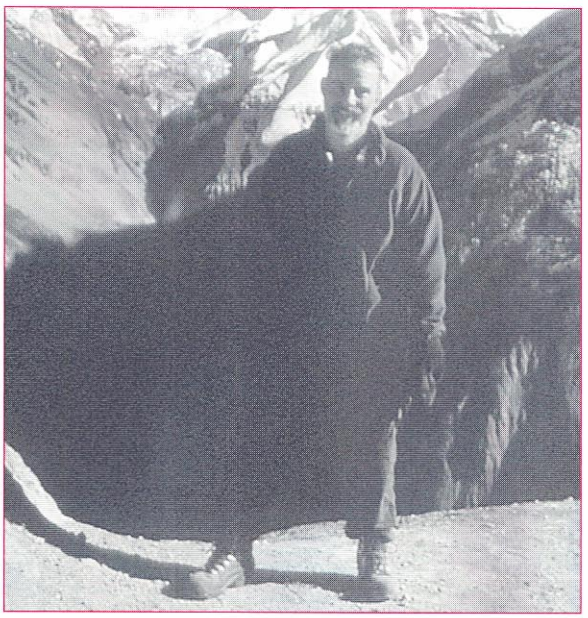
Many things strike you when you're in an exotic place like Nepal. When you're trekking, sometimes it's as simple as how dirty you are or how much you'd like to sleep in a real bed. But on this trip I spent a lot of time thinking about what are known as Nepali undulations.

Finding the word undulation in a guidebook makes any hiker wary. The chances are excellent that the book is discreetly understating the rigors of a rugged section of trail. In Nepal, the severity of those ups and downs is exaggerated and far more challenging that anything I've encountered on my hiking trips in the United States. So I spent a lot of my time in Nepal considering how much effort it was to go up and to go down those undulations. Of course, facing that challenge also made the trip a lot more fun.

Through the years the Alliance has faced many undulations, some more severe than others. A year ago we were at the bottom of a Nepali undulation, feeling tired and worn and not entirely sure that we'd find our way to the top of the next undulation. Our fund balance had dropped precipitously over two years; we were looking for an executive director; and we had bills owing not just to vendors and merchants, but the biggest bill of all was due to our own regions. In effect, the biggest debt we had was to our own members. It was not a pretty picture.

In the Himalayas, where most travel is by foot, its easy to be a week's walk from the nearest road or hospital. You realize that if you were to break a leg or even sprain an ankle, it's going to take a major effort by a lot of people to get you out. It's a feeling that Alliance board members knew all too well a year ago. We knew that, as an organization, that the Alliance was in a precarious place and that the years of good work done by the Alliance could be lost, that we needed to put an effective plan in place and do it quickly. The last year has shown that those efforts are paying off.

'...if we've learned anything from the past year, it should be that mutual effort and coalition building will take us up the next undulation.'

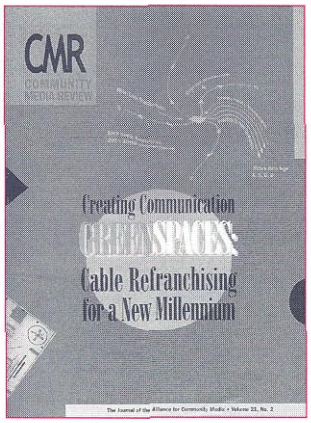


Like most mountaineering expeditions, it took a lot of people to turn things around, to help get the Alliance moving up the next undulation. Regional leaders demonstrated great patience and forbearance in agreeing to a plan that repays the regional debts. Payment plans to cover debts to outside vendors were negotiated. Central States took on managing *Hometown*, not only doing a brilliant job at it, but saving the Alliance from having to contract out for those services. Bunnie Riedel was hired as the Alliance's new executive director and, with the assistance of Kelly Matthews, has brought in more membership dollars than ever before in the history of the Alliance.

Hundreds of volunteers from the Northwest and across the country put on a successful conference in Portland, where we also kicked off the Campaign for Media Democracy. Volunteers helped put on successful regional conferences. We had a successful Dachman Members Challenge to raise funds to support Alliance public policy efforts. The Alliance participated in a number of court cases that, while they may not have the cachet of winning in the Supreme Court, are vital to strengthening and preserving public space in our media. And the Alliance worked at the state and local levels to help communities preserve their local rights of way and to successfully negotiate new franchises with cable operators.

The view is a lot better now than it was 12 months ago. We've had a good year programmatically and financially. Its not likely that every year will be this good, especially financially. We need to prepare for those leaner years. Some time we'll find ourselves heading downhill when we need to be going up hill and some time we'll be wondering if we can make it up the next undulation. But if we've learned anything from the past year, it should be that mutual effort and coalition building will take us up the next undulation.

Rob Brading is chairman of the Alliance for Community Media and executive director of Multnomah Community Televiison in Gresham, Oregon, rbrading@mctv.org, telephone 503.667.7636.



Refranchising Issue Reprints Now Available

Additional copies of CMR's *Creating Communication Green Spaces: Cable Refranchising for a New Millennium*, published in fall '98, are now available through the national office at a cost of $2 each for Alliance members, or $4 each for non-members.

To request copies, contact the Alliance for Community Media at 666 11th St. NW, Ste. 806, Washington, DC 20001-4542, by telephone at 202.393.2650, or email at acm@alliancecm.org

Special thanks for their support to make it possible to Malden Access Television, Massachusetts; the Central States Region of the Alliance; Cincinnati Community Television; and the Community Television Network, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

CMR Editorial Board Accepting Candidates

The *Community Media Review* Editorial Board is looking for a few good members. This is your opportunity to take an active role in furthering the mission of *CMR* to provide vigorous and thoughtful debate on issues crucial to Alliance members.

The CMR Editorial Board is responsible for the creation of the Alliance's quarterly national publication. The board makes decisions of the format of CMR and oversees the selection of themes and development of the content of each issue.

Any Alliance member dedicated to the mission of the Alliance and who has previous experience writing or publishing is invited to apply.

Applications will be accepted until February 8, 1999. The CMR Editorial Board will review them at its February meeting and present its recommendations to the national Alliance board at its March meeting.

To receive an application form, contact: Pat Garlinghouse, Access Houston, 3900 Milam, Houston, TX 78767; telephone 713.524.7700; or email at patg@accesshouston.org.

UP&COMING

February 19 – Deadline for entries to the 1999 Hometown Video Festival.

March 18-21 – Alliance national board meeting, Washington, DC.

April 16-18 – North East Regional Conference.

May 15 & 16 – Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference – Westminster, Maryland.

April 30-May 1 – North West Regional Conference – Ashland, Oregon.

May 20-22 – Central States Regional Conference – Capital Plaza Holiday Inn, Frankfort, Kentucky.

May 13-15 – South East Regional Conference – University of Tampa ,Tampa, Florida.

July 5-6 – Alliance national board meeting, Cincinnati, OH.

July 7-10 – 1999 Alliance for Community Media International Conference & Trade Show – Cincinnati.

November 17-20 – Alliance national board meeting, Tucson, AZ.

PETITION FOR MEDIA DEMOCRACY

Democracy is the foundation of our society. To flourish, democracy depends on the ability of people to communicate ideas, share opinions and get information. Today, the primary means of information delivery and exchange is through electronic media.

Frequently there is a conflict of interest between the free flow of public and civic communication and the need of commercial media to create profit. People become disenfranchised in this conflict between commercial media and the public interest because of: race, age, gender, disability, sexual orientation, religion, political beliefs, native language or economic status. Ironically, these disenfranchised people are the least represented in commercial, for-profit media.

I believe that true democracy requires all people have access to electronic media. Media access includes:

- access to electronic communications training, equipment, facilities and delivery systems
- literacy in the use of electronic media
- making sure all people are enabled to engage in meaningful civic dialogue and enabled to access information
- the designation of public funds for the public use of equipped and operational non-commercial, community-media centers and facilities

True media democracy can be achieved when elected and appointed representatives support positive legislation and policies to guarantee that all people have access to electronic media. I urge you, as my representative, to support media democracy.

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'Talk Amongst Yourselves...'

Information, resources, networking and national office announcements are at your fingertips day or night. The Alliance hosts two listserves to help you:

For all people interested in community media (membership in the Alliance not required) sign on to:
alliance-forum@igc.org

For members only, we offer a moderated listserve at:
alliance-announce@igc.org

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or call 202.224.3121

COMMUNITY MEDIA IN ACTION

In this issue of Community Media Review you will find stories that illustrate the powerful results that can occur when non-profit community organizations put Community Media in Action. These stories demonstrate how various media tools; from television to computers, are being used to organize big and small actions; from city-wide projects to neighborhood activities, in order to improve the quality of life in our communities.

We begin with a story by **Barbara Popovic** about the CAN TV project created by the Chicago Access Corporation to serve the 8,000 non-profit organizations in the windy city. She defines the underlying theme of this issue in her first line when she writes, "A media landscape without public access is a bleak prospect for the non-profit sector."

There are many national non-profit organizations using local PEG access to reach a national audience. **Betsy Martinelli**, of the Steel Recycling Institute, tells us how public access television is "helping us to educate local consumers on the important role recycling plays in solid waste management."

Deborah Vinsel provides an example of how one access center built non-profit service into the foundation of their training program. Their "Mission Nonprofit" has "evolved into an effective outreach tool for local non-profit organizations" and a great training tool for the access center.

Rosa Leonardi tells the story of how access staff in Salem, Oregon have been working with a group of inmates at the Oregon State Penitentiary to help teens fully consider the consequences of their actions. **Wendy Blom** describes how the Cambodian community in Lowell, Massachusetts is using the public access channel to help themselves adjust to life in America and inform the wider community about Cambodian culture. **Myra Lenburg** reports on how a statewide medical association is using Amherst Community Television to reach homebound people. Turning to Hawaii, **Jim Moikeha** explains how tele-instructional videos have become part of the ALU LIKE youth entrepreneureship program in its efforts to 'kokua' Hawaiian natives.

Dirk Koning offers us a report from the Vidéazimut world gathering held in Cape Town, South Africa and reminds us that people across the globe are "reaching, stretching, grabbing and clasping at local media tools and transmission."

Tuning in to TEAM TV provides a glimpse at how video is being used by the YMCA in Fort Wayne, Indiana to reach "at-risk" youth. TEAM TV, is a year-round YMCA Coalition for Youth Services program that gives youngsters the opportunity to learn video production and broadcasting skills. Visit the TEAM TV web site at http://www.ymca-teamtv.org

Community Technology Centers have become a major new force in the effort to serve the communication needs of citizens and community-based organizations across the country. **Peter Miller** provides an overview of this phenomenon and reports on the growing number of PEG access centers incorporating CTCs in to their facilities.

Not all CTCs are operated by PEG access centers, however. **Cary Williams** tells us about the Ohio Community Computing Center Network, created in 1994, which has evolved into a statewide association of nearly 30 organizations providing access to technology and training. **Cathy Wise** writes about how one public library transformed their public access center into a full-fledged media center.

Next is a reminder from **Jim Floyd** that people are looking for a different way to respond to common problems. He believes that community access can play a key role in creating a public space "acting as a catalyst for civic involvement, and convening forums for public deliberation."

This issue concludes with articles concerning community radio. The first provides an overview of the numerous radio stations being operated by colleges, schools and community nonprofits on an international basis. The closing article is a story by **Shane Carpenter** and features the community radio station operated by Sacramento Access.

— Ric Hayes, Guest Editor-in-Chief

NONPROFITS & PUBLIC ACCESS

THE CHICAGO MODEL

by Barbara Popovic

A media landscape without public access is a bleak prospect for the nonprofit sector. Unfortunately, in many places around the country, nonprofits do not use public access television. Nor will they, unless access centers take responsibility for assessing the needs of the sector, developing services that meet those needs, and providing education and outreach to local nonprofits.

Chicago – The Early Years

In Chicago there are 8,000 nonprofit organizations. Many of them operate with annual budgets of under $100,000. In its early years of service to the community, CAC held orientation meetings to introduce local nonprofits and institutions to Chicago Access Network Television (CAN TV). Additionally, focus groups and a survey were conducted with nonprofits to identify perceptions and evaluation of CAC services. A key finding was that the primary obstacles to use of CAN TV by nonprofits were the lack of time and resources.

One challenge for CAC was to go beyond the traditional training/production model of public access and to develop new services that would be cost effective, simple to use, and allow for timely and frequent use by nonprofits. CAC focused its efforts on developing services that would meet the needs of the sector and help overcome time and resource limitations. The decision was made to segregate these services specifically for

One challenge for CAC was to go beyond the traditional training/production model of public access and to develop new services that would be cost effective, simple to use, and allow for timely and frequent use by nonprofits.

use by nonprofits and to dedicate staff to service that client base.

The Process

At CAN TV, a four step process is used to help guide nonprofit use of the channels:

1) a needs assessment is completed to identify key communications needs,

2) the group is routed to the appropriate service(s) to meet those needs,

3) an orientation and/or training is completed,

4) following use, groups are encouraged to evaluate results and give feedback to CAN TV staff.

The Services

Nonprofits in Chicago can participate in a range of CAN TV services, selecting those that best respond to their needs. Many groups make use of multiple services. Whether groups take advantage of a simple-to-use telephone-access community bulletin board or live call-in programming, it is important that the service matches the need.

The following descriptions of each service are followed by examples of feedback that CAN TV has received from Chicago nonprofits.

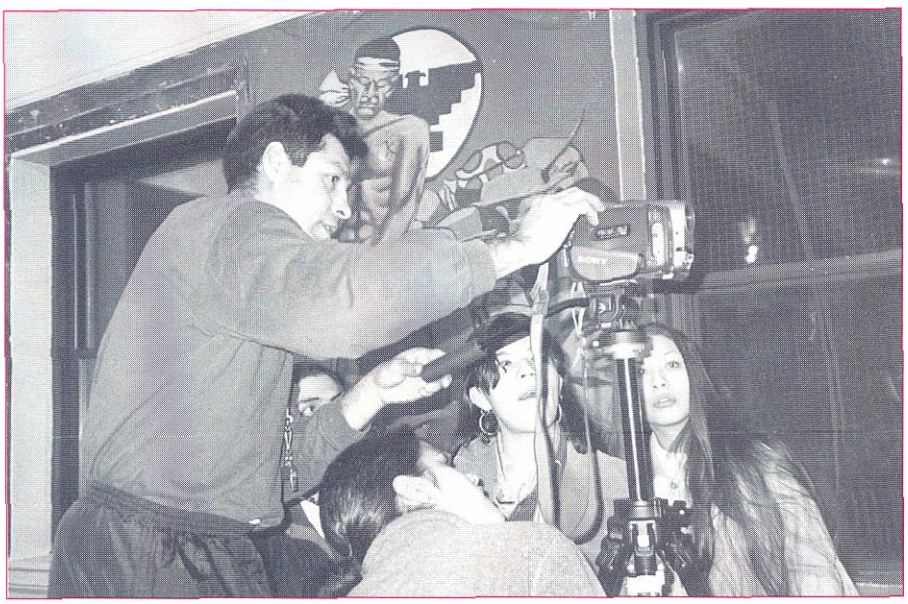
CAN-CALL TV42 is a 24-hour daily telephone-access bulletin board that gives groups frequent, timely exposure for their messages. Example: The University of Illinois at Chicago used CAN-CALL to promote two free conferences hosted by the Health Careers Opportunity Program. When registrants were asked where they heard about the conferences, 40% said CAN-CALL TV42.

FYI TV27 is a 24-hour-per-day computer illustrated video magazine that informs people about nonprofit services they may not know exist. Example: After use of FYI TV27, Elizabeth Boitsov of Boitsov Classical Ballet wrote, "We estimated around 300 calls mainly from parents with children ages 4-7. From this around 100 made appointments for an audition, 70 actually participated and 35 students are registered in the youngest classes of Boitsov Classical Ballet."

HOTLINE TV21 is a live call-in service that allows groups to directly address questions and concerns of callers during the program. Example: After completing a 13-week series on transportation reform, Center for Neighborhood Technology wrote, "There is nowhere else in Chicago that public policy organizations such as ours can take advantage of a public forum as easily and efficiently as the one you offer."

CHICAGO LEARNS is designed to serve the educational community combining a telephone-access bulletin board for educational messages and a fax-on-demand service to distributed materials related to the messages. Example: Lourdes High School wrote, "The timely manner in which you get our information to the public is phenomenal."

COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROJECT is a



Casa Aztlan, a social service agency serving Latino families, partners with CAN TV as part of the Community Partners Initiative.

two-part initiative involving community events coverage and customized training and technical support for targeted community groups. Example: Following coverage of a public forum focused on education, Golden Apple wrote, "We received hundreds of inquiries, which translate into improved education for the school children of Illinois." Following training for 10 Chicagoans with disabilities who are part of the activist group ADAPT, Gloria Nichols said, "Who knew or who thought you'd see people behind cameras sitting in wheelchairs, but we did it. We did the whole thing."

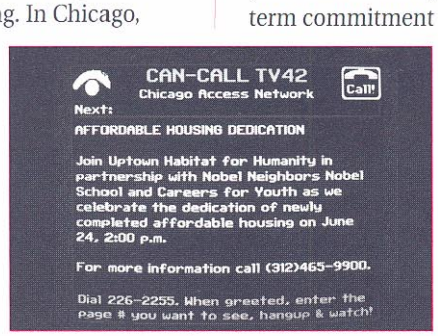
New Research

While nonprofit use has grown tremendously over the years at CAN TV, no research about nonprofit use of CAN TV had been conducted since 1989. An ideal opportunity to revisit the awareness and perceptions of nonprofits presented itself with the cable franchising process in Chicago and the need to complete a community needs assessment. Research conducted for CAN TV by CJ Research in September of 1997 revealed that:

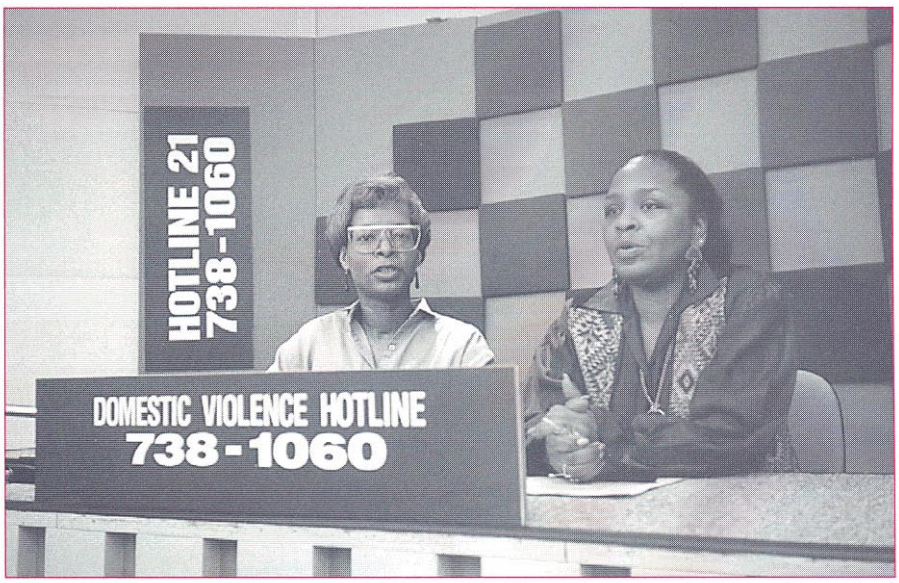
- 8 out of 10 Executive Directors are aware of CAN TV
- 93% of CAN TV clients and 89% of non-clients think CAN TV is valuable to the community
- Less than 5% of Chicago nonprofits think that commercial television is doing a good job at serving the local community

Advocacy

Strategic advocacy is an important part of cable franchising. In Chicago, nonprofits play a key role in that work. Groups are asked to write letters detailing the results they get from using the channels. Nonprofit representatives are invited to report their results and experience from using CAN TV to the City of Chicago Cable Commission. Nonprofits are on hand to participate in public hearings held by the Chicago City Council. Quotes from nonprofits are used in media and public relations pieces, brochures, and fact sheets to help communicate the scope of nonprofit use of the channels.



Thousands of Chicago viewers call CAN-CALL TV42 each week for information on a wide range of services offered by Chicago nonprofits.



Domestic violence agencies use CAN TV21's HOTLINE service to reach viewers in need of counseling, referrals or other assistance.

Nonprofits are featured in CAN TV's promotional campaign that uses cable channels system-wide, cable bill stuffers, and a high profile presence on public transit to get the word out.

The Result

The culmination of years of work on cable franchising came in August and September of 1998 with Chicago City Council approval of a new franchise for Ameritech New Media and renewed franchises for TCI and Prime Cable. A franchise agreement with 21st Century was approved in 1996. CAC was supported through separate funding agreements with all of the companies and will receive 10% of channel capacity during the 15-year term of the agreements. CAC's long-term commitment to serving nonprofits was instrumental in this process. When the cable franchise agreements were delivered to the members of City Council for their review and approval, the entire public comment section was filled with letters from Chicago nonprofits to Mayor Richard M. Daley seeking continuation of CAN TV's services to the community. The letters were from educational, health, social service and arts groups pointing to the importance of CAN TV as a community resource.

As cable franchising continues around the country, every access center has to look at its service offerings and ask what the community can't afford to lose. If the local access channels are a conduit for information about jobs, critically needed health care, foster care, housing, transportation needs, disability rights, and other community concerns that are too often ignored, then the answer to that question will resound throughout the community. Nonprofits, and the many hundreds of people that they represent will actively seek support for public access. Public officials, the companies and the media will have to listen.



FYI TV27 helps nonprofits reach Chicago viewers with information about health, education, employment and other services.

Barbara Popovic is Executive Director of Chicago Access Corporation, 322 S. Green, Chicago, Illinois 60607. This article has been shortened to meet CMR's specifications. For a complete and more comprehensive version, call Martha Messner at (312) 738-1400 and request a copy of "Nonprofits and Public Access: The Chicago Model," or email your request to popovic@anet-chi.com.

Maximizing Outreach Opportunities through Community Media

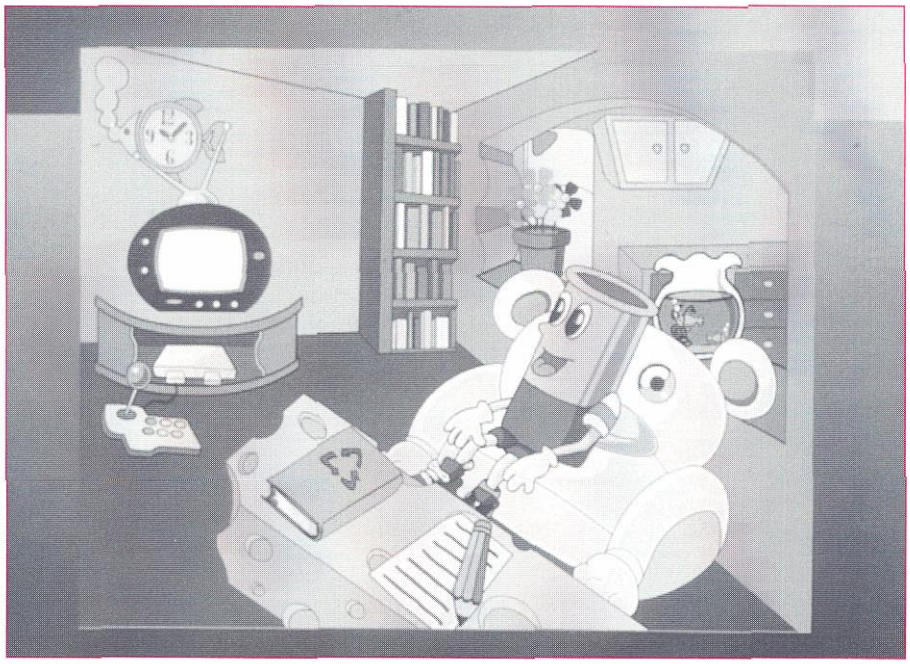
by Betsy Martinelli,
Manager, Media Relations
Steel Recycling Institute

Shrinking budgets for nonprofit organizations are challenging communications departments to find inexpensive and creative ways to stretch the public relations dollar. Likewise, community media operators are challenged to find inexpensive and creative programming to appeal to a mass audience. It's an outreach opportunity made in heaven.

The Steel Recycling Institute (SRI), a not-for-profit trade association which educates consumers about solid waste management, has worked with community media over the past decade to promote recycling. From public service announcements to full length programming and joint production initiatives, public access television has provided SRI a unique medium through which to reach consumers with important information about local, state and national solid waste concerns.

SRI's first foray into community media was part of a complete multimedia public service program. In 1993, the Institute developed the Steel Recycling Public Service CANpaign, a turnkey promotional kit designed to help local recycling coordinators promote steel recycling in a cost-effective manner. The CANpaign kit included posters, camera-ready art, radio and television public service announcements, as well as a 10-minute video tracing the history of steel recycling.

The video was initially developed as a tool to be used in local school and community presentations. Proactive recycling coordinators, however, recognized the value of sharing this *World of Steel* video, as well as the public service announcements, with the community-at-large through public access television. "The response to our public service announcements and the *World of Steel* video was overwhelming," said Rich Tavoletti, general manager of marketing communications for SRI. "The outreach through community television turned out to be a key element of our public service programming. In fact, we still receive numerous requests for those PSAs."



ROSCOE (Recycle Our Steel; Conserve Our Environment), the official spokescan of the Steel Recycling Institute is featured in the latest free video showcasing recycling and solid waste management issues.

The interest/demand for SRI's *World of Steel* video, as well as growing requests for more informational programming about the steel recycling process led to the production of a new series of videos. SRI took cameras behind the scenes of recycling to help consumers better understand how steel products are recycled, and the environmental impact the simple act of recycling can have.

The first in the series, *Steel: The Enviromental*, debuted in April of 1995, in conjunction with the 25th anniversary of Earth Day. The five minute program followed the life cycle of steel from consumer, to collection and processing, and finally remelting into new steel products. The release of "Enviromental" also marked SRI's first efforts to reach out to community media, independent of contact through the local recycling office. SRI used a direct mail/fax back form to offer free videos to public access stations. "Within six months of the video's debut, we had distributed more than 100 tapes," said Mary Norton, vice president of public and education relations.

World of Steel was soon followed by three videos specific to steel product categories: steel can, appliance and automobile recycling. These videos were originally produced as a presentation tool. However, SRI's growing reputation within the community media market provided yet another expanded opportunity for recycling-related programming.

Based on the continued success of outreach through community media, SRI decided in 1997 to develop its first video specifically targeted to public access television. Most of SRI's past productions provided a nuts and bolts approach to the recycling story, programming aimed at an adult audience. This latest production, "Steel: A Totally Recycled World," would take the youth audience on a

rollercoaster ride through the world of steel recycling. Literally.

A Totally Recycled World capitalized on the popularity of SRI's spokescan, ROSCOE (an acronym for Recycle Our Steel; Conserve Our Environment), to provide students in grades K-7 an entertaining and enlightening view of the necessity of recycling. ROSCOE and two young reporters visit a variety of locations where steel is prominent, including a car dealership, appliance store and amusement park.

Once again, SRI chose to market the "Totally Recycled World" video directly to public access program directors, with an overwhelming response. To date, more than 200 videos have been distributed.

"By choosing to air SRI's videos, programming directors are helping us to educate local consumers on the important role recycling plays in solid waste management," Norton said. "In turn, we think we are providing them with innovative material which helps to diversify the local programming schedule."

SRI's outreach through community media is not limited to distribution of pre-produced programming. The Institute also provides video b-roll, script ideas and general background information to facilitate joint productions initiatives. This provides recycling coordinators and public access stations the opportunity to "localize" the steel recycling message.

Videos currently available from the Steel Recycling Institute include:

- *Steel: The Envirometal*
- *Recycling Steel Cans: Today's Green Choice*
- *Wash Cycle, Spin Cycle, Recycle Major Appliances*
- *Steel: Driving the Success of Automobile Recycling*
- *Yes I CAN!*
- *Steel: A Totally Recycled World*
- *The World of Steel*

For more information about free programming available through the Steel Recycling Institute, please contact Betsy Martinelli at 800/876-7274. And to learn more about steel recycling and solid waste management issues, please visit our website at www.recycle-steel.org.

MISSION NONPROFIT

Thurston Community TV Program Serves Many Purposes

by Deborah Vinsel

In 1996, Thurston Community Television (Olympia, Washington) was faced with three seemingly unrelated challenges. One was how to encourage greater participation by nonprofit organizations. Another was how to give newly trained members the confidence to tackle studio productions. The third was finding a way to foster *esprit de corps* with new members. We found one solution for all concerns in a very special program, "Mission Nonprofit."

Nonprofit organizations often asked for an easy way to introduce their services to the community. We began "Mission Nonprofit" as a staff-produced program to give nonprofit organizations the opportunity to showcase themselves. The program was very successful, but required a significant amount of staff time coordinate and shoot.

New members told us they needed more hands-on experience before they felt confident to volunteer as a crew person or start their own program. We decided to add a required production to the training structure. However, mock programs were not very effective. They weren't aired and lacked the intensity of an actual program for the channel. Then we hit on the idea of using "Mission Nonprofit" as the training production. It worked beautifully.

The production is a simple, talk-show format. Each month, a different local organization is invited to be the guest. Paul Paluskas, our training coordinator, schedules the guests and acts as the producer. An experienced TCTV volunteer hosts the program, a TCTV staff person directs the show, and people in the training class are the studio and control room crew. The newly trained members get to experience an actual production and see their name in the program credits. The process also helps foster a greater sense of teamwork between TCTV members and staff.

Our training and volunteer coordinator used to spend several hours recruiting a volunteer crew for each Mission Nonprofit production. Now, those hours are spent helping new members prepare for the production as part of our training process.

"Mission Nonprofit" is an easy way introduce nonprofit groups to our community. The Boy Scouts, Safeplace Rape Crisis Center, Olympia/Thurston Visitors Bureau, United Communities AIDS Network, Olympia Film Society, and the Salvation Army are among the more than 40 organizations that have appeared on the program in the past two years. They have used "Mission Nonprofit" to describe their services, recruit volunteers, explain their fund raising projects, and publicize a variety of activities. And, as a result of their appearance on the program, many groups decide to become members of TCTV.

Mission Nonprofit is a great example of how access centers can creatively combine existing resources to support many different needs. This simple program idea has evolved into an effective outreach tool for local nonprofit organizations, a great training tool for us, and a fun way for new members to involve themselves with TCTV. It is a win-win situation for all of us.

Deborah Vinsel is executive director of Thurston Community Television in Olympia, Washington. Contact her at dvinsel@wln.com or by phone at 360.956.3100.

COMMUNITY MEDIA IN ACTION

Reaching Out From Within in Salem, Oregon

CCTV staff in Salem, Oregon has been working with a group of inmates at the Oregon State Penitentiary to get their programs out to the youth in the state.

The group, Los Hermanos, was formed by inmates who wanted to help teens think about the consequences of their actions. Working with juvenile probation officers, groups of at-risk youth were brought monthly to the prison to go through the nine part Los Hermanos program. With video equipment in their activities section, the inmates produced a nine-part series *Reaching Out From Within* in Salem, Oregon in the hopes of reaching youth throughout Oregon via public access television.

CCTV aired the programs several times, and the local paper printed a notice about the schedule. Staff received three phone calls: in one a mother said that she made her son watch the two hour program because he was on the verge of getting into more serious trouble. She said she could tell that watching the programs had made a difference to him because there were definite changes in his behavior.

CCTV also sent the programs to play in Portland, Woodburn and Ashland on the community channels.

– Rosa Leonardi, Community Development Coordinator
CCTV, Salem, OE, telephone 503.588.2288

Bringing Educational Programs to the Homebound In Amherst, Massachusetts

The Western Massachusetts Lung Association had been presenting new information on dealing with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) to patients at educational forums throughout the area. There was a small group of COPD sufferers, however, who were homebound and couldn't come to the meetings. The Western Massachusetts Lung Association needed a way to get this crucial information to the homebound group.

That's when the Lung Association came to Amherst Community Television. They knew that homebound people almost certainly had cable television. They suggested they could videotape the meetings and asked us to show the videotapes on our public access channel. We would schedule the tapes far enough in advance so that they could send letters to the homebound patients and tell them when to watch. ACTV quickly agreed and six videotapes were shot, scheduled and shown.

Follow-up by the Lung Association indicated that all of the homebound COPD sufferers watched the videotapes and they all learned the new techniques to better deal with their illnesses. Because the shows were listed in ACTV's regular newspaper listing, however, many other people also tuned in. We received several phone calls after the first show asking when the rest of the series would be run. The information was very interesting to others in the community.

The joint project of the Western Massachusetts Lung Association and ACTV was an example of the outreach public access television can do that other television outlets are not willing to do. Because we are local and we are not dependent upon ratings, we could "narrowcast" our signal and target a special audience that couldn't be reached in any other manner.

For more information, contact Myra Lenburg at Amherst Community Television at 413/256-1010, or email at actv@amherstcommon.com.

– Myra Lenburg, Executive Director
Amherst Community Television, Amherst, MA



Cambodian Programming in Lowell, Massachusetts

It is often newcomers to the US, who most appreciate and take advantage of our First Amendment right to freedom of speech. In Lowell, Massachusetts, public access television is being used intensively by Cambodian immigrants who had no such freedom in Cambodia. In the 1980s, thousands of Cambodians displaced by the Khmer Rouge regime were resettled in Lowell, an industrial town of 120,000 residents with a long history of employing large numbers of immigrant workers and their families. Today, the Cambodian community makes up about 20% of the population. Many of the older Cambodians speak no English, and are in fact, illiterate in their own language as well. Adjusting to life in America has been difficult for many of these people because of their traumatic war experiences and because American culture is so very different from what they had known.

Several Cambodian organizations have been producing public access programs at Lowell Telecommunications Corp. (LTC) to lessen the feelings of isolation within their community. There are currently eight weekly programs in Khmer language, enough to fill an entire seven hour block of programming which runs three times weekly. The Cambodian American League of Lowell, headed by Ratha Paul Yem, produces a weekly news program, *Cambodian Cable News*, in Khmer at the LTC studio. The program includes news from Cambodia as well as US news of interest to the community. Another Cambodian, Vichiravuth Kret, also produces a weekly news show called *Khmer TV*. The two shows have a friendly competi-

See CAMBODIANS – page 14

For Native Hawaiians at ALU LIKE

Tele-Instructional Videos 'Kokua' Youth Entrepreneurship Efforts

by Jim Moikeha

Entrepreneurs start and run their own business for profit. They gauge risks. They make tough decisions. Fueled by their own initiatives, they compete for customers in the marketplace. And sometimes, entrepreneurs do all of this before they are even old enough to vote.

ALU LIKE, Inc. was incorporated in 1975 as a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization in response to new federal legislation that could lead to funding for Native American organizations nationwide. Its initial project was the first systematic assessment of the needs of Native Hawaiians. ALU LIKE has since grown into a multi-service organization that operates 19 projects that range from early childhood education to elder care. ALU LIKE's mission is "to kokua" (assist) Hawaiian natives who are committed to achieving their potential in caring for themselves, their families and communities."

A number of studies concluded that there was a disproportionately low number of Native Hawaiians developing businesses despite available resources and support. The studies stated that "Entrepreneurship training is one of the most critical needs for Native Hawaiians" and concluded that ALU LIKE should have two levels of entrepreneurship training courses for Native Hawaiians, an adult level and a youth level.

The resulting outcome of the studies was the creation of the Native Hawaiian Business Development Center in 1989, to conduct an adult entrepreneurship training program. On September 2, 1992 the Youth Entrepreneurship Demonstration Project began for Native Hawaiian students in grades 9 to 12 once funding was secured from the U.S. Administration for Native Americans. The demonstration project which utilized traditional teaching methods targeted two high schools with a high population of Hawaiian students, and high percentage incidences of non graduation and low work force participation for those 16 years and older. A total of 57 students were enrolled.

Over the two and a-half year period of the demonstration project, there were many successful outcomes. Both school principals committed to continue integrating entrepreneurship into approved related course studies, and there were positive signals from other teachers and schools who expressed their interest in the entrepreneurship program. education/public television.

Prior to the termination of the demonstration project ALU LIKE was approached by the Hawai`i State Department of Education (DOE) with a request for partnering, and to present the youth entrepreneurship program via a series of weekly tele-instructional programs which would be co-produced by ALU LIKE and the DOE, be directed by the DOE at its studio, and aired live on `Olelo, the PEG access cable station. New funding for ALU LIKE project administration costs was provided by the U.S.DOE/Native Hawaiian Vocational Education Program, while the state DOE agreed to cover all TV production and related costs.

One class of students established a cooperative to test and develop two food snack items for sale among their peers. Following the principles of business development the class was successful in its products development and marketing.

In the fall and spring semesters of the 1995-1996 school year, ALU LIKE and the DOE teamed up to present the youth entrepreneurship course via tele-instructional programs live one hour each week for 17 weeks, with ALU LIKE staff as host and instructor of record. The series presented a specific curriculum that could be followed by participating teachers and students when using the ALU LIKE Student Workbook. During the school year a total of nine teachers and 203 students at six high schools on O`ahu, Hawai`i and Maui participated in the program. The program was further enhanced with monthly on-site visits by ALU LIKE staff. One class of students established a cooperative to test and develop two food snack items for sale among their peers. Following the principles of business development the class was successful in its products development and marketing. Another class was given instruction by ALU LIKE staff on shaping animal marrow bones into Hawaiian pendants. They learned well and the resulting outcome was a number of pendants fashioned and completed for sale, or as gifts.

In the second year of the partnership, the entrepreneurship course was accepted as an elective course for credit taught via electronic media through the DOE Electronic School. ALU LIKE and DOE staff spent the time writing new scripts and restructuring the electronic classroom based upon assessments to improve effectiveness. A co-host was added to the program, a series of electronic field trips to local businesses were pre-taped, and guest business owners were invited for live interviews. Special video messages focused on helpful business hints and program-related homework assignments. The spring telecast also featured a youth group who role-played a business start-up scenario in a serial format, concluding on the last telecast day. Another feature of the spring semester was the addition of an entrepreneurship course website within the DOE Electronic School website (Also see: http://www.k12.hi.us/~entre/entre/overview.html <http://www.k12.hi.us/~entre/entre/overview.html>). Participating students who had access to the Internet used the website and email to complete their assignments.

Seventy-six students enrolled in the course that spring for credit and enrichment. A course requirement for credit was a completed business plan. There were several good business plans, but one that stood out was from a student at Ka`u on starting and operating a Mobile

Veterinary for Ka`u. She loves animals and as a result volunteered once a week at a Veterinary Shop in Hilo to learn about the business. She presently attends Colorado State University and hopes to graduate with a degree, and complete her veterinary studies.

In ALU LIKE's third and final year of partnership, 131 students participated in the course, with 85 of those students enrolling for credit. Each weekly tele-instructional program was shortened from one hour to 45 minutes to allow for complete classroom viewing time. Each week's tele-instructional program was directed live in the fall semester, again with a co-host, pre-taped electronic field trips to local businesses, live interviews with guest business owners, business hints and homework assignments. For those teachers and facilitators who planned to participate in the spring semester, a complete package of 17 pre-taped tele-instructional programs, a course instruction booklet and an ALU LIKE Student Workbook with teacher supplement was mailed to them. This was to be in addition to the regular telecast schedule via `Olelo. One student of note that year was an eighth grader with excellent computer skills. He took advantage of the website and email capabilities and was never afraid to ask a lot of questions. His business plan was in upscale fashion designing. The quality of business plans increased this year compared to the prior school years and due in part to the refinement of the tele-instructional programs, access of the programs, on-site visits, website and email capabilities, and teachers and facilitators who were committed to the program.

The project continues today as a statewide DOE Electronic School course for credit. ALU LIKE has given DOE permission to print copies of its Student Workbook for use by participating teachers/facilitators and students, and the weekly taped tele-instructional programs continue to be aired on `Olelo. This has been an invaluable experience for ALU LIKE for if it were not for distance learning our reach would have been severely limited. Now, despite budgetary cutbacks, our work lives on in pre-recorded lessons perpetuating the learning and outcomes as originally designed. Not only did it improve the effectiveness of our delivery of services but it substantially increased the awareness our community had of the services we provide.

Jim Moikeha is Director of Native Hawaiian Business Development Center of ALU LIKE, Inc., Honolulu, Hawai`i.



CAMBODIANS — continued from page 12

tion, and both enjoy a huge following.

According to Kret, his loyal viewers rely on the up to date information about Cambodia that he gets from news services on the Internet. He distributes his show to five other public access centers in towns with substantial Cambodian populations. These news programs are also a vehicle for getting important local information to this non-English speaking population. The producers include public service announcements and event notices in Khmer within their shows. Other programs have religious content. They include a Cambodian Baptist show, and several Buddhist programs sponsored by local temples.

Other Cambodian organizations use LTC for community development projects. This spring, LTC Executive Director George Preston co-authored a grant with the Cambodian Mutual Assistance Association (CMAA), the largest Cambodian association in Lowell. The grant from the Massachusetts Council for the Arts is being used to train Cambodian teens who are at risk for gang involvement, pregnancy, and school drop out, in the use of video equipment. They will use their video skills to document the teaching of traditional arts to other youth, and to make TV shows that express their lives and concerns. Samkhann Khoeun, the executive director of the CMAA, sees the video activity as an effective way to help these troubled teens integrate their Cambodian heritage with American culture. It provides them a means of expression which will be seen by a wide audience, and the process of working with professional artists and videographers will improve self-esteem and teach valuable job skills.

Public access television is a way for the Cambodian community to teach the wider community about Cambodian culture. The community annually holds a Southeast Asian Water Festival in Lowell, which this year attracted 20,000 Southeast Asians from all over the US and Canada. The festival includes traditional boat races, performances, Asian food booths, and environmental education. The six hour festival is broadcast live on LTC. The broadcast has two hosts on location who speak to viewers and conduct interviews in Khmer, Laotion, and English.

As a staff member at LTC, it is wonderful to see how essential public access can be to a community that would otherwise be quite isolated by language barriers. The Cambodian programming is playing a major role in integrating this group into American life, while simultaneous weaving Cambodian elements into the cultural fabric of Lowell.

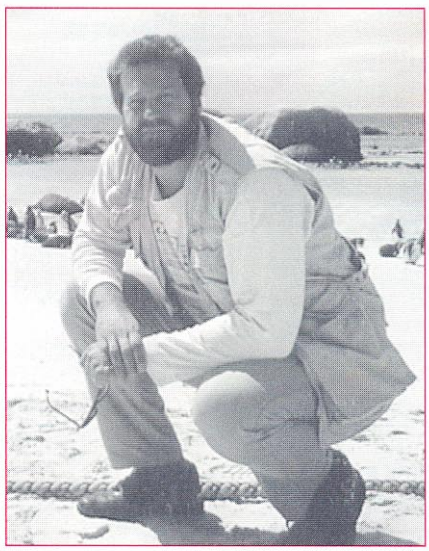
–Wendy Blom, Community Programming Coordinator
Lowell Telecommunications Corp., Lowell, MA

Wendy Blom works with non-profit organizations in the community to produce programming. She has an MA in Mass Communications from Emerson College.

'Walk With Me'

Following in the footsteps of Nelson Mandela

by Dirk Koning



Do the ends justify the means? I'll admit this thought rattled incessantly around my brain as I contemplated an invitation to Cape Town, South Africa. What's not to like? Striking scenery, a great currency exchange rate, 150 community media folk from 30 nations, 80 tapes for screening and spring exploding where oceans meet. Thirty-eight hours. That's what to contemplate. Thirty-eight hours in transit from Grand Rapids, Michigan to Cape Town. Yikes. My 6'8" frame carrying 300 pounds cringed at the thought. But off I went. I was shaken from my self-induced zen trance by the screech of the 747's wheels hitting the tarmac of Cape Town's airport. An astonishing ride into the hotel revealed over 500,000 folks crunched in box hut villages without water, sewage or electricity. The conference hotel was ironically called the Ritz, but had lost its luster long before apartheid ended.

This country is truly the land of contrasts. Spring was popping out all over this past September with thousands of protea flowering in dozens of colors. The box homes, however, were only brown. Blue green water washed up white sand beaches while black and white African Penguins basked sublimely in the sun. Black, White and Brown labels still haunt citizens, and tears flow freely as the Truth and Reconciliation Committee daily tears the flesh off old wounds. The average resident of Cape Town earns 5 ran a day, and I was exchanging 6 ran for one dollar. The International Association of Video and Media (Vidéazimut) was hosting a world gathering in Cape Town accompanied by the 4th bi-annual VideOlympiade. Conference sessions were mixed with long 'break' times for chats and great evening parties. As always I spent more time listening than talking and learned far more from world examples of community media than I could ever hope to offer. Where there is a will, there is a way. And when it comes to human beings with the desire to communicate, any means at any time will do. Folks without cable television in southern Brazil are treated to community media practitioners who drive from village to village with a camcorder and video projector, announcing to the locals that they can help make a "movie" that will be projected against an open building wall later that same night. Folks show up and learn the basics while producing on the spot and then the town gathers, the generator is tucked behind a hut, and the local, same-day, film is screened to the howling delight of the community.

Bush Radio operates near Cape Town with local volunteers cranking out tunes with equipment similar to what I had at home a decade ago and gave to my little brother. But the music and local wisdom flows freely and those without electricity make hand crank radios. Two minutes of winding and you can relax for an hour listening to the news and views of your neighbors.

A Malaysian woman showed up with her video of working conditions of other Malaysian women in the "Free Trade Zones" that the U.S. so proudly touts. Needless to say, a few minutes of footage of actual working conditions, seven days of 12-hour shifts, four outhouses for 150 women and the policy questions seem moot.

Time and time again as I have the luxury to criss-cross this globe, I see people reaching, stretching, grabbing and clasping at local media tools and transmission. Meanwhile global media giants snap up franchises and bandwidth internationally, clearly not willing to make the "mistake" again of allowing local access (PEG cable television) like the U.S. did. There has clearly been an international strategy to portray U.S. cable access in a terrible light internationally to assure its demise and stifle start-ups.

Ten days passed quickly. Emotions ran high walking the same path as Mandela after his prison release and standing where Desmond Tutu proclaimed the end of apartheid. But during the 38 hours heading home I contemplated recent events. No doubt, community media is "out of the bag" worldwide and will not be squelched. Just like South Africa's democracy. Radio stations launched in South Africa, Korea passing favorable laws to allow community radio and television, Ireland planning to deploy community radio, Brazil hoping to hang on through the upcoming financial rumblings to see community media expand. This list goes on, some successes, some failures, but a spirit of achievement permeated the halls and corridors of the gathering and I have no doubt that our brothers and sisters in community media worldwide will succeed. Will we? We must.

– Dirk Koning is executive director of the Grand Rapids [MI] Community Media Center. Contact him at dirk@grcmc.org, dirk@koning.org, or by telephone at 616.459.4788.x101.

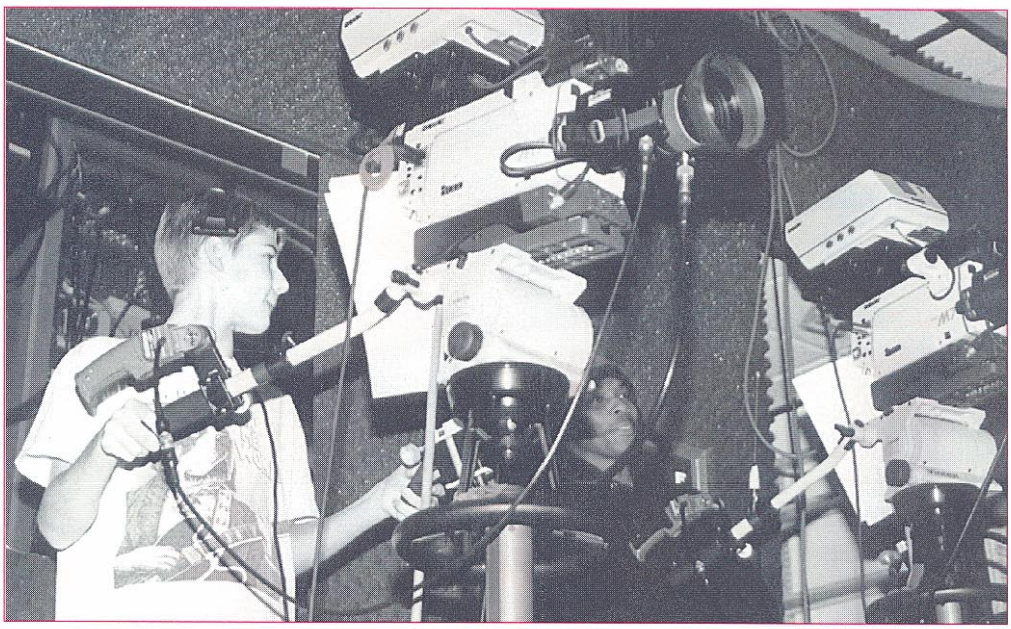
VIDÉAZIMUT

***Vidéazimut** – In 1990 a handful of audiovisual practitioners from different continents launched a group called Videazimut. Today, Videazimut is an international alliance bringing together independent video and television creators. Its members represent over 12,000 practitioners for whom democratic communication is essential to building democratic societies. Visit them at www.videazimut.org*

TUNED IN TO TEAM TV

Turning the Tide for Teens in Ft. Wayne

By Steve Penhollow
The Journal Gazette,
Fort Wayne, Indiana



Portage Middle School student Anetta Hyndman says she got into a little trouble a while back and part of her "punishment" was membership in TEAM TV, a year-round YMCA Coalition for Youth Services program that gives youngsters the opportunity to learn video production and broadcasting skills.

"If I didn't get into trouble," the 13-year-old says, "I wouldn't be here."

Cherith Federspiel, 13 and home-schooled, does not conform to the teen apathy cliche. Trouble did not bring her to TEAM TV. Enthusiasm did.

"When I came here, I just wanted to be in front of the camera," she says. "But when I started to see everything that went on behind the camera, I felt like I wanted to do everything."

On the surface, both girls seem very different. But once they start talking at a good clip about TEAM TV, their levels of passion for the project become indistinguishable. Each tries to out-enthuse the other.

Hyndman is assisting Federspiel on an investigative video segment that will become part of a live news show scheduled to air at 5 p.m. Tuesday on Public Access Channel 10. TEAM TV produces one live show a month on a subject chosen by the youthful group's racially, economically and chronologically diverse membership. This Tuesday's show will look at the popularity of tattooing and body-piercing.

"It's a really good story," Hyndman says, her eyes bright. "At least, I think it is."

Federspiel has high praise and deep pride for another project the team is working on – *BookSocks*, an educational puppet show for tykes.

"We do a better job with our puppets than the Muppet people do," she insists.

"We hold meetings six days a week," he says. "Not all the kids come to every meeting, but you'd be surprised at how well-attended they are. When I tell the coordinators of other teen programs about our schedule, they say, `Six days a week? We're lucky if we can get them to meet every other week!'"

As Hyndman and Federspiel narrate over a montage of tattoo images at the Channel 10 studios in the main branch of the Allen County Public Library, they seem equally comfortable with mikes, cameras, and the arcane directions patched through to them from the director's booth.

Hyndman later reveals she has been entertaining fantasies of becoming a broadcaster on the race car circuit. Her father is a racing enthusiast, she says.

In the director's booth are 18-year-old Jared Spicer and 15-year-old Amy Gonzales, both Snider High School students. On this particular day, Spicer is in charge of monitoring the videotape equipment and sound levels, Gonzales is the director.

On another afternoon, both teens could very well be in front of the camera. Each TEAM TV member gets a chance to do a little of everything.

Gonzales seems a natural director. She coordinates camera movements and issues commands to the on-screen "talent" in a smooth and authoritative way.

"I'm thinking of making this a career," Gonzales says. "I know seniors who still don't know what they want to do with their lives. But I feel like I'm already there. I've already started out as something."

The person who makes that start possible every day is TEAM TV Director John Krill. When he interacts with the youths, he doesn't come off as a lecturer or instructor of any official type. He is a fellow enthusiast, and he chides the kids like a fellow kid.

"I tease them mercilessly," Krill says. "I'm a coach more than anything else. I want them to feel we are all in the same boat."

Krill, a 49-year-old graduate of Indiana-Purdue, Fort Wayne with degrees in communications and secondary education, gets frustrated with the youths' more-than-occasional lack of focus and organization, and their short attention spans.

But he knows the commitment they have demonstrated is still remarkable. "We hold meetings six days a week," he says. "Not all the kids come to every meeting, but you'd be surprised at how well-attended they are. When I tell the coordinators of other teen programs about our schedule, they say, `Six days a week? We're lucky if we can get them to meet every other week!'"

TEAM TV started in 1995. It grew out of Channel 20, a defunct teen-oriented cable project on which Krill served as educational access coordinator.

After spending a few years as a consultant, instructing teachers around the state on how to integrate video production into their curricula, Krill returned to Fort Wayne and pitched the TEAM TV idea to David Brittenham, director of the YMCA's Coalition for Youth Services. Brittenham agreed to finance a test.

A year later, Arts United got involved and TEAM TV was on terra firma.

Initially, TEAM TV was open only to status offenders. But Krill found the troubled youths fed off each other in negative ways. So he decided to open TEAM TV to any young person 12 to 20 interested in video production and broadcasting.

Troubled youths are still referred to the program. They are required, on average, to attend about 60 meetings, but some stay beyond that. Youths who join for the love of it don't get school credit, but they gain invaluable experience on high-tech equipment that may not be available at their schools. The program is free to all participants.

It is remarkable how well the present membership of 20 unique youths gets along, Krill says.

"We have kids of all ages in here from every social and educational background. And they all work as a team. Sure, there are occasional squabbles, but I am still amazed to see a 19-year-old call over to a 13-year-old and say, `Can you help me with this?' The mix is one the keys to the success of the program."

An even bigger key is Krill. He is paid for 25 hours of work a week, but he usually puts in 65. He squeezes in occasional consulting work when he can – to make ends meet.

"We have kids of all ages in here from every social and educational background. And they all work as a team. Sure, there are occasional squabbles, but I am still amazed to see a 19-year-old call over to a 13-year-old and say, `Can you help me with this?' The mix is one the keys to the success of the program."

Krill says he isn't complaining.

"I love doing this. I love it when these kids get really involved."

A number of Allen County educators are clued into TEAM TV and pass the information along to their students. But Krill's most successful recruiting tool is word of mouth.

TEAM TV's members are its best public relations people. Memorial Park Middle School student Brittany Turner, 14, says she wears her TEAM TV shirt and jacket (earned through high attendance) to school as often as she can.

"Kids come up to me and say `Hey, what is that?' pointing to my jacket. I tell 'em, they say `Sounds like a good idea,' and they come over. I have recruited a lot of people for TEAM TV."

Turner has loads of enthusiasm for TEAM TV, but not quite as much for tattooing and body-piercing.

At an on-site video shoot in a local tattoo parlor (parental permission has been granted), Turner is overwhelmed.

"I've seen too much," she says, miming a fainting spell.

The other youths, however, are genuinely interested and surprisingly sober about the whole thing: There is no joking or giggling. They have come with good questions for the patrons and the staff, and they are fairly fearless in the asking.

There is some mild disagreement about who will do what when, and there are some eccentric notions about focusing, where the camera should point, and for how long.

But Krill just sighs, smiles and crosses his arms.

"There's a point where you just let them go. It's their project, after all."

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NOTES FROM THE FIELD

Community Technology Centers as Technical Assistance Providers

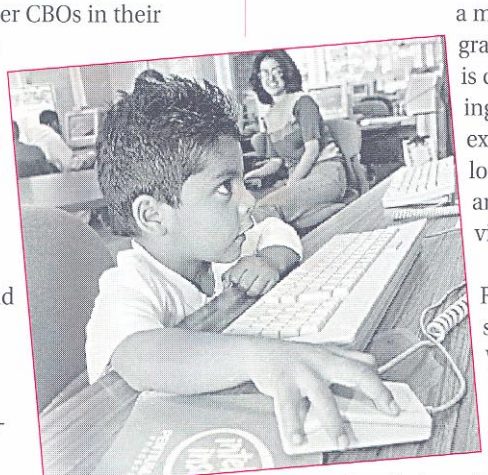
by Peter Miller



Most of the work of community technology centers (CTCs) is looked at with a perspective on serving individuals so that we frequently don't quite see the important role that they provide in supporting other community-based organizations (CBOs).

It's not surprising they get looked at in this way. Serving individuals is generally what they've been established for: to provide a service for those in the community who don't ordinarily have access and support to use technology effectively on their own. But seeing the role that CTCs play as technical or technology assistance provider to other CBOs and nonprofits helps bring into focus a number of things that CTCs are concerned with: sustainability and the need to explore new program directions; a desire to serve CBOs, to collaborate and develop partnerships; and the ability to see themselves as exemplary models of a new kind of vital community institution.

A good many CTCs already perform this function for other CBOs in their community that are interested in developing CTCs of their own. The Commons in Santa Barbara, CA, works with a local social service agency, Unity Shoppe, the Boys and Girls Club, the city, both PC and Mac Users groups, the county arts commission and the Inner City Community Agency in this way. The Literacy Council in Durham, NC, has been serving as a mentor program to help two literacy councils in VA and MD set up computer-assisted family literacy programs serving public housing residents. Boys and Girls Clubs, Y's, settlement houses, community networking, Urban League, subsidized housing developments, libraries, museums, and PEG access centers that have developed CTC programs serve as important mentors for affiliates in their national organizations. CTCs like Plugged In and the Clubhouse at the Boston Computer Museum specifically look for appropriate programs to partner with on a more integrated program level. This avenue is certainly a promising one and can be expanded to provide a local network of CTCs and supporting services:



▲ At the RECA Foundation in south central Washington state, five CTCs were established last year: The Amistad Family Learning Center teaches classes in adult literacy and English as a Second Language. The Amistad Elementary School Lab, a 28-computer multimedia center, is used during the day by the school's classes and by adults/families at night. At the Kennewick Housing Authority, HeadStart students, After School Homework attendees, residents of Kennewick Housing Authority, and participants in the Family Self Sufficiency program use the computer lab. And at the Edith Bishel Center for the Blind, adaptive computer equipment and software is available for the sight impaired to learn computers and the Internet. The Washington State Migrant Council partnered with RECA to win the CTCNet and Apple Computers grant to develop an Employment and Training Center during the day, and public access computer lab after hours. WSMC assists people on public assistance to learn computer job skills, computer training and Internet use. A Computer Recycling Center provides computers and training to the Community Technology Centers and low-income families. Families, such as participants in the Family Self Sufficiency Programs, earn their computers through community service as volunteers in the CTCs, information providers for the Free-Net Webmasters, and mentors.

While one of the major technical assistance roles that CTCs play is helping other CBOs develop their own CTCs, it's useful to see technical assistance as being applicable much more extensively across a range of nonprofit organizations and needs. Consider the following:

▲ At Boston's United South End Settlements, a group of enterprising participants from Project Place, a nearby day shelter, came to the Computer Resource Center to learn the skills to establish a commercial art and desktop publishing business and develop the technology

structure for invoicing for a toner cartridge recycling business.

▲ In the North Bronx, Pius XII Family Service Center developed an employment retraining program for displaced workers and teamed up with the United Settlement Houses of New York to develop a number of internship sites where they got experience running labs in preparation for workforce reentry.

▲ Community Access, a halfway house residential and support services program for people with psychiatric disabilities in lower Manhattan, piloted a number of technology resources in the early '90s and assisted three other agencies with similar programs to set up computer systems where both staff and consumers have access to an agency-wide database that tracks consumer records, maintaining employee records, time sheets, work schedules, managing time off requests, as well as scheduling meetings with a check for times and places that are not conflicts, and make use of the database information with an internal email system that lets you send messages to groups by worksite and job function.

▲ The Community Minority Cultural Center, Inc. in Lynn, MA, assisted the Essex County Community Organization by providing computer training programs for its trainees in their Machinist Training Program and is also working with Operation Bootstrap to develop a training program for their staff.

▲ At Virtually Wired in downtown Boston, Coralee Whitcomb reports that they recently started a course called Bringing Your Nonprofit Online. They've also sponsored something called NonProfit Mondays, where an NPO can bring as many people as it wants for $35 for two hours.

▲ In East Palo Alto, CA, Plugged In has a web page development business, Plugged In Enterprises, to create revenue. Plugged In Enterprises is staffed by teens, with the direction of a small group of adults. The teens develop and maintain web pages for businesses nationwide. The teens also take part in all aspects of running a businesses, including decision-making and operations. In cooperation with America Online (AOL), Plugged In is the home of "Plug In," a teen discussion and information site on AOL. Supported by two adults, twelve teens produce, design, and mediate discussions on different topics each week.

CTCs like Plugged In *and the* Clubhouse *at the Boston Computer Museum specifically look for appropriate programs to partner with on a more integrated program level. This avenue is certainly a promising one and can be expanded to provide a local network of CTCs and supporting service.*

▲ The HUD-supported Neighbor-hood Network programs at Northport and Packer Apartments in Madison, WI, under the direction of Carmen Porco, have provided access and education services to a number of area community organizations, worked with the Dane County Youth Commission to develop multimedia projects and publications on non-violence, trained the police department officers to mentor students on the Internet, developed computer applications for plotting community gardens with the community action coalition, and helped the job center develop an employment preparedness program.

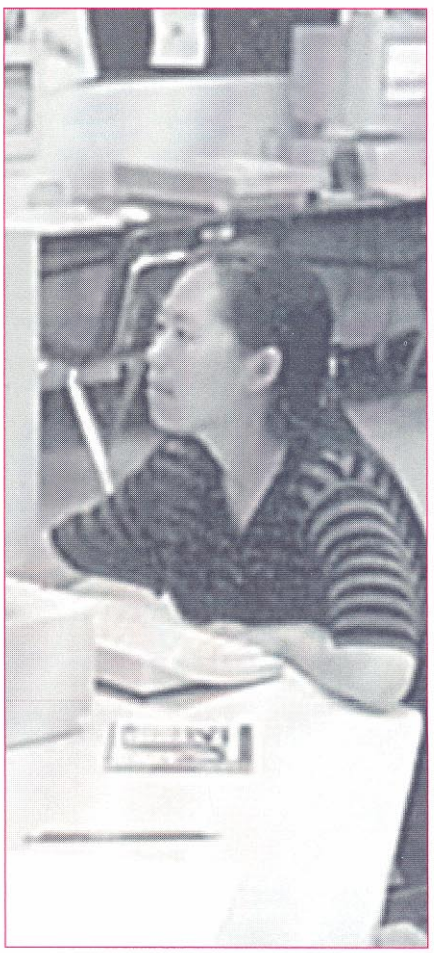
▲ La Plaza Telecommunity in Northern New Mexico is providing information technology training to Taos, Questa, and Penasco teachers and has offered free web design classes to the community nonprofits in the county including Taos Pueblo Environmental Office (http://www.laplaza.org/tpeo/), La Jicarita Enterprises Office (http://www.laplaza.org/b_c/ljec/), and Taos Outdoor Recreation Association, (http://www.laplaza.org/a_l/tora/).

▲ RTPnet, http://www.rtpnet.org, in the Research Triangle Park area of NC provides services for professional organizations, clubs, schools, churches, and other nonprofits for $50 per year. Services include web space and email lists, and will soon include web-based discussion forums and a web interface to e-mail list archives. According to Judy Hallman, RTPNet Executive Director, "We have approximately 100 members. We are into our second year of billing, and since we have very few expenses, we now have about $8,000 saved up."

▲ LibertyNet provides technical support, volunteer web design assistance, web hosting, web development, and an extensive training program to almost 1,000 member nonprofit organizations in the Philadelphia region.

These examples go well beyond providing technology services for other agencies' participants. They help transform those agencies' capacity for using technology, from basic productivity applications tools – word processing, databases, spreadsheets, graphics, and email – to more advanced arenas – communications, networking, and organizational planning. According to La Plaza Telecommunity Executive Director Judith Pepper, "We have found there must be a champion or volunteer at the community nonprofits for the web page to be both created and maintained." And the possibilities build from there.

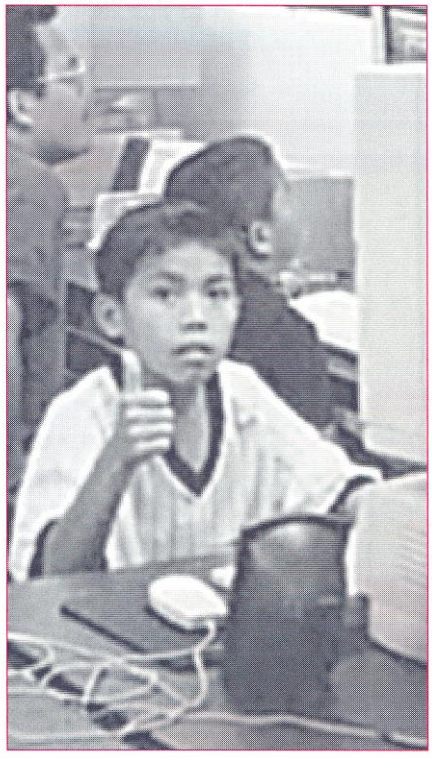
The line between providing tools to individuals and organizations is often blurry. Consider the Greater New Bedford (MA) Community Computing Centers (GNBC3, http://www.ultranet.com/ ~nc33/main.htm), where Corinn



Williams sums up some of the examples of the training and technical assistance work they doing with grassroots groups and nonprofits:

▲ "A member of the local NAACP developed fund raiser fliers and raffle tickets, learning Microsoft Publisher and Print Artist in the process. A local social justice/welfare reform organizing and advocacy group learned how to develop a database for mailing labels, urgent action alerts, codes for legislative districts (they have a membership of about 2,000). A non-violence counseling center for male batterers developed and designed a program brochure. Sister Rose, the director of the New Bedford-based homeless shelter, has become a "regular" at the center, bringing in her budget to put on an Excel spreadsheet, convert a staff policy handbook originally typewritten into a Word document, and set up scheduling formats for the soup kitchen volunteers. A direct aid support group for the local Mayan community raised over $16,000 for the family of the victim of a tragic, fatal industrial accident in New Bedford in part due to a *Boston Globe* story that was posted and read internationally on the Internet (donations came in from all over the country and as far away as the U.K.). We have been working with the American Indian Friends Coalition to help them manage and set up their database of members and donors as well as set them up with free email, which is helpful in keeping the group in touch with supporters across the country and with events in Guatemala and Chiapas. They are also setting up English classes at an adjoining room of GNBC3 in order for the students to practice on the Rosetta Stone software recently donated to GNBC3, thanks to CTCNet! We have also held workshops on creating a newsletters, fliers and grants research on-line with the Associated Grantmakers of Massachusetts (AGM). We are a site for the AGM on-line library and for COMM-Pass, the state's posting system for non-profit funding that increasingly is becoming the sole source of state RFPs and funding info. These are some examples that come to off the top of my head, but what I think has been the best part of bringing in these folks to the center has been the face to face information sharing and community networking the center provides."

PEG access centers being transformed into "new media" centers are clearly in the forefront of this development.



PEG access centers being transformed into "new media" centers are clearly in the forefront of this development.

▲ Malden, Massachusetts Access Television expanded with a small computer lab, rooted in its original vision "to give people who don't normally have access to communications technologies the ways and means to express their ideas," and within the year, since parts of MATV's goal was to establish consultant and support services to other agencies and answer their questions about computers and the Internet, did teacher training for the largest elementary school in the city.

▲ In nearby Cambridge, CCTV has a proposal for teacher training in media arts for 5th and 6th grade teachers citywide (see Community Media Review, Summer '98, p. 23).

▲ A whole group of non-PEG access video centers are moving in this direction, too. like Street Level Media in Chicago and the Youth/Voice Collaborative in Boston. In Washington, DC, Phil Shapiro reports that One World Media Center has given video production assistance to over 100 organizations in the DC metro area. "And then two months ago the new Chancellor of Germany (then a candidate for Chancellor) called up One World to hire a video producer to shoot footage of him visiting the White House."

▲ In Burlington, VT, where Chittenden Community TV has given birth to the Old North End Community Technology Center, CyberSkills/Vermont, and CyberSkills/USA, the CTC assisted the Department of Employment in developing their own computer training capacity, worked with the Northlands Job Corps to deliver a computer service technician training program, and helped the library, Boys and Girls Clubs, Settlement House and senior center develop their computing programs. Lauren-Glenn Davitian reports recently, "We are in the midst of working with the Vermont Domestic Violence Network, 18 sites throughout the state that provide hotline and shelter services to victims of domestic violence (women and children). Through a grant from Bell Atlantic ($15K) we put together a program to support the contribution of new Internet connected workstations that would enable them to exchange information electronically and to collaborate across the distance of Vermont."

"Our CyberSkills Workshops (full day) included hands on CDROMs, Internet, Email and Electronic Conferencing Tools (eg., IRC and ICQ). One hundred staff members from around the state attended 10 workshops. The next steps they identified included computer basics, Access/Database training (to aid in their compilation of local and statewide statistics). We are now developing a full day Information Management workshop to assist with the needs they identified to better manage their electronic resources. The gist of these workshops are not technology but capacity building, organizational development and change management."

▲ At Lowell Telecommunications Corporation, Felicia Sullivan reports: "LTC has just gone through an intensive strategic planning period and our refocussed mission is specifically geared towards supporting the organizational capacity of local NPOs. Over the next few months our educational programs (both computer and video based) will be geared more and more towards training staff and members of NPOs to run their own mini-media centers. LTC currently

pays particular attention to organizations looking to use desktop publishing, web design, and business applications to support their organizational goals. We design special training sessions for organizations looking to train staff in their operations....During our strategic planning, LTC staff and board members came to the conclusion that the resources (physical and mental) at LTC could best be used to support other community based organizations who in the long run serve more citizens than LTC could ever hope to accommodate."

The Alliance for Community Media interest in helping PEG access centers extend and target video services to NPOs fits well with computer and internet technologies. These technologies are a growing arena for development and provide a powerful compliment of resources to PEG access centers as they assist local CBOs. Brooklyn Cable Access Television presented an impressive workshop on their new lab at the annual conference last July in Portland and keyed in on how PEG centers can expand technology in keeping with their video focus. Much the same thing is going on in Lowell. As Felicia goes on to explain:

"Since we are combined with public access television producing stations (we're all one big entity), we are trying to push computer technologies to move into those realms as well. So we are offering quite a number of courses in advanced desktop publishing, multimedia production, looking at how moving images and video and sound and still images work within a computer environment, how you can create multimedia presentations. We're also looking at the Internet, not just how to access it or even design simple web pages, but how things like audio and video are working in the Internet environment, how communication is enhanced. We're thinking in terms of how broadcasting may change as new technologies such as cable and modem technology and video streaming become available and merge very nicely with the television broadcast production element that we have. And then we also are moving into the very high end video production elements that are computer-based, like digital non-linear editing, 3D graphics, animation, 3D production and modeling, and trying to look at how these technologies are merging, and really educating people and giving them the opportunity to learn these tools so that they're really a very techno-savvy sort of community. There's a real wide breadth to our structured formal classes."

Centers that have done any support/training/technical assistance with local nonprofits are positioned to expand their work dramatically. Opportunities abound (see, for instance, the National Strategy for Nonprofit Technology at http://www.rffund.org/strategy). Whether PEG access and other CTCs are doing this now or just starting to examine technology support as a possible direction for future growth, CTCs are potentially resource rich for this transition – to build on the skills of existing volunteers and recruit new ones and give them opportunities for greater assistance, pull in software donations, corporate and other resources, further develop their advisory boards and technology councils and committees, expand collaborations and partnerships in these areas.

. . .in light of the Alliance's interest in helping PEG access centers extend and target video services to NPOs, computer and Internet technologies provide a powerful combination of complementary resources to help local CBOs, and it's a growing arena for development.

As these examples show, technology assistance is a key direction for supporting sustainability goals,* as well as partnerships and collaborations; it brings together the broadest developments in media and technology and our hopes for working with other CBOs and nonprofits; and it underlines CTCs as key community institutions to help us move into the 21st century.

** For another suggestive perspective here, see "Flexible Networking, Information and Communications Technology and Local Economic Development," by Michael Gurstein, Centre for Community and Enterprise Networking, at http://ccen.uccb.ns.ca/articles/flexnets-ict4led.html*

©1998. Peter Miller (peterm@ctcnet.org) is a community technology activist and currently works as a public policy project consultant with the Community Technology Centers' Network (http://www.ctcnet.org).

The Grand Rapids Community Media Center salutes its affiliate GRTV on 15 years of bringing unfettered public access television by, for and of the people to the citizens of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

...and its community radio affiliate WYCE 88.1, providing an alternative voice in West Michigan since 1989.

The CMC proudly endorses the Campaign for Media Democracy *www.alliancecm.org* and the Peoples Communication Charter *www.waag.org/pcc*

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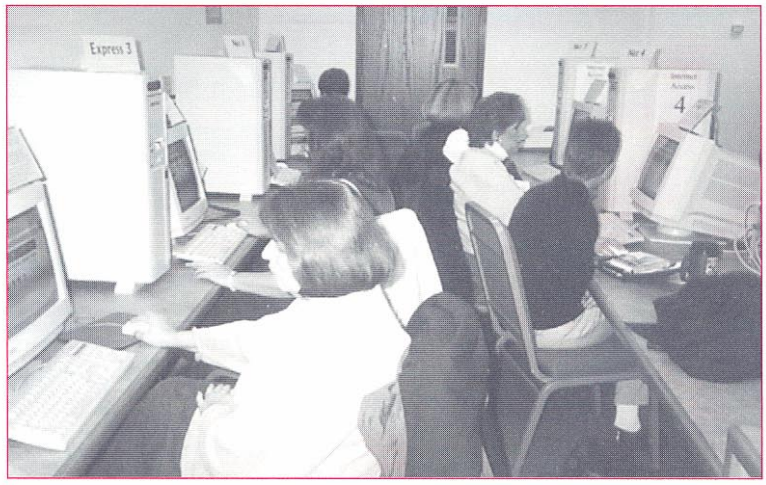
Building Community Through Media

Libraries & Community Media

How One Public Library Transformed Their Public Access Center into a Full-Fledged Media Center

by Cathy Wise

Acting Manager, Access Fort Wayne



The Allen County Public Library serves northeast Indiana as the largest public library in the region. Our main branch is located in downtown Fort Wayne and we have 13 branches located in neighborhoods throughout the city and county.

ACPL has a long history in the use of video and computer technology. Our video experience started with black-and-white reel-to-reel video equipment in 1979 when we began acquiring a tape library, which we used in launching public access cable station Channel 10 in 1981. The library has used computers to maintain their book collection and automate the materials checkout process since 1986. Over the years all library departments and branches have offered some level of computer usage for the public.

In June 1996, after four years of toil, the cable television franchise contract between the City of Fort Wayne and Comcast Cablevision was renewed. One of the provisions of the franchise set in motion the transformation of the public access center into a full service community media center. By September of 1996 we began operating the government access channel and had renovated the entire access facility. We doubled its staff size and added a second studio and four separate editing suites, created new offices and an origination area and changed our facility's name to Access Fort Wayne. We have a commitment from the cable company that a second public access channel will come on-line after the rebuild of the cable system.



During this pivotal point in our facility's operation we were asked by the library to manage a community computer center. We saw this as a great opportunity to establish a community resource for Internet connection on a larger and more productive scale.

In the winter of 1996 the library installed a local area network (LAN) running at a connectivity speed of 1.544 megabits to the Internet via a fractional T1 line. The LAN linked all administrative computers in the main building together and provided an Internet link for the computer center. The center is outfitted with eight IBM compatible workstations with Windows 95 for Internet usage using Netscape Navigator. We also set up two IBM compatible workstations with Windows 95, Microsoft Office and Corel, Wordperfect and two Power Macintoshes with an array of software using Stylewriter printers. All of the IBM compatible workstations share print capabilities on two Packard Bell Laser printers.

Once we had formulated our operating policies, the equipment was installed and the room was ready for service. We officially opened the computer center in February of 1997. Immediately the center was very busy. We averaged over 87% usage during the week and over 90% on the weekends. We basically act as a sign-in and sign-out regulator for the computers and occasionally the library would offer one-on-one training for patrons. We do not require a library card or any type of identification to sign-up and there is no charge to print your documents. There are three computers available only in 30-minute increments so people can quickly check their email or do a brief Internet search while the other workstations may be booked up to three hour time blocks.

We wanted to expand the level of training we provided and outreach to different parts of our community so in the spring of 1997 we applied for and received a grant through the Benton Foundation Open Studio Project. We were able to hire a trainer to create and facilitate a group of workshops.

The target group for the workshops was our local arts community. We spoke with various organizations to promote these workshops and Arts United promoted our workshops in their newsletters. A group of artists and musicians attended the workshops on Introduction to the Internet and basic HTML creation. Other uses of the computer center have ranged from library sponsored workshops to visiting high school classes reserving the computer center.

In January of 1998 we hired a part time computer center assistant. This person is currently offering two workshops a month to the public. We have had great response and the workshops are usually filled.

Here are some examples of the variety of workshops offered by Access Fort Wayne and the library:

ACPL University, a staff training program, is organized by librarians in our system. They have offered the following work-

see LIBRARIES – page 28

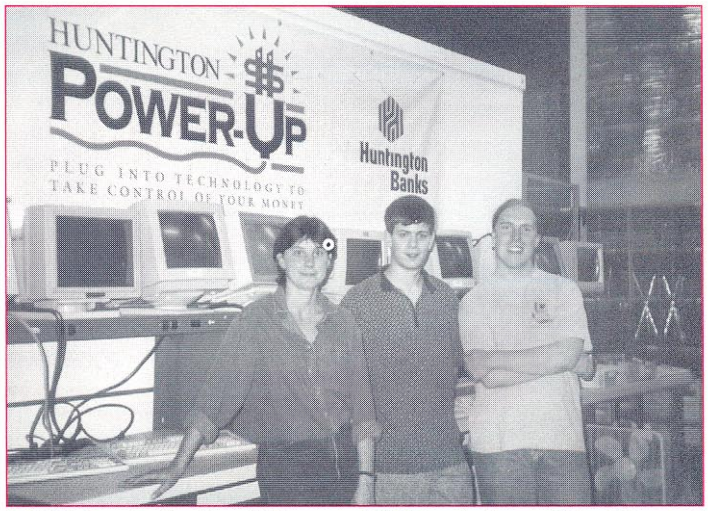
Community Computing Centers Play Vital Role

by Cary Williams

One of the biggest challenges facing community computing centers is gaining recognition from public policy makers for the important role centers play in providing technology access in low-income communities. Community technology centers need to work to be seen as the third leg of a tripod, in partnership with both schools and libraries.

In Ohio, community computing got a jumpstart with a 1994 settlement between the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, consumer groups, and Ameritech Ohio in an alternative regulation case. The agreement included $2.2 million from Ameritech to create and fund 14 community computing centers in low-income neighborhoods around Ohio. Each of the 14 selected centers received $150,000 from Ameritech over three years. Since 1995, when the Ohio Community Computing Center Network was formed to oversee the distribution of the Ameritech money, OCCCN has evolved into a statewide association of community computing centers. OCCCN now works with nearly 30 organizations providing technology access and training.

OCCCN member centers, located in both urban and rural low-income communities, run the gamut in terms of programming and personality. While there are many similarities among the centers, the differences are notable as well. Some are in well-established organizations such as Urban Leagues and YMCAs. Others operate more on the edge, in church basements or without paid staff. Some are public access cable stations. For others, this is their first foray into technology. Many concentrate on children's programs and have vibrant after-school clubs. Others focus their energies on adult education. One common theme of the centers is their commitment to open public access. Centers strive to provide a regular, scheduled time when anyone can come in and use the computers how they need to, without being part of a more formal program.



OCCCN Coordinator Cary Williams and VISTA volunteers Richard Sams of the Appalachian Media Access Center and Rob Harper of OCCCN in front of some of the 40 computers donated by Huntington Bank to OCCCN members this past July.

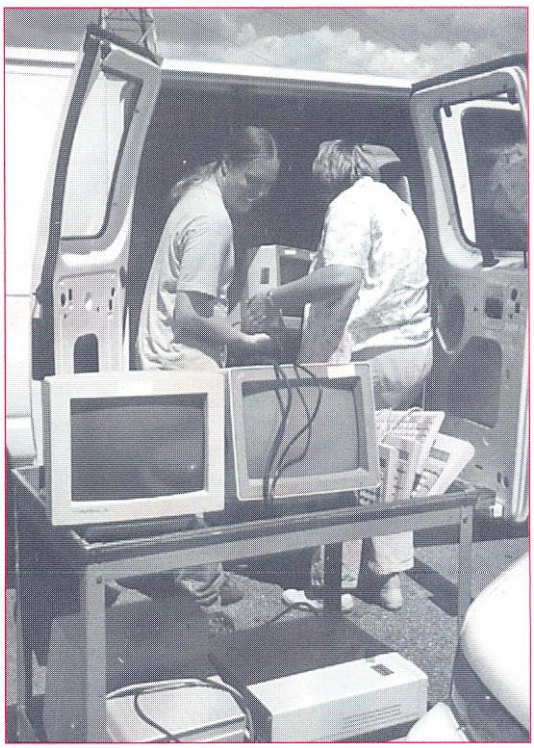
Each of the 14 Ameritech-funded community computing centers has been given the challenge to become self-sufficient over the three-year funding period. Those and other community computing centers are finding the search for ongoing sustainable funding to be a formidable challenge, and are concerned about being forced to choose between user fees and their mission of serving Ohio's low-income communities. While many centers have found funding to support traditional job-training programs, they are finding that support is more difficult to come by for open access, where it can be challenging to measure success in ways that sell the program to funders.

To deal with this funding challenge, we need to 1) find time to build and develop appropriate partnerships that can strengthen programs and improve technology access; and 2) do a better job of educating policy makers on the legitimacy of community computing centers.

We need to carefully document our successes, and tell the stories as one voice. Centers play an important role in technology access, reaching people sometimes missed by schools and libraries. Schools often close early. Community computing centers usually have evening hours. Some libraries, while providing Internet access, do not allow email to be received or sent. Community computing centers do. We need to make the case to policy makers that it is a good investment to support this third leg in technology access – community computing.

For more information on OCCCN and its member centers, go to www.occcn.org.

Cary Williams has worked with the OCCCN and community technology issues since 1995. Contact her at carwilli@ctcnet.org, or telephone at 614.262.5634.



Rob Harper, OCCCN VISTA volunteer, and Mary Kern of the Marietta Area Community Computing Center load computers into a van for travel to Marietta.

PUBLIC SPACE

Access Television and Deliberative Democracy

by Jim Floyd

How can community access centers be catalysts in strengthening their communities? One way is to create a "public space" where deliberative dialogue between citizens replaces strident debate, a major cause of citizen disenchantment with the political process. Political rhetoric and the pro/con approach of national media are driving forces behind the disconnect between the public and its problems. People are looking for a different way to talk about problems and new ways to act together to find solutions. One way is through public deliberation where citizens consider multiple approaches to a problem rather than one or two specific solutions. As part of this reflection, people weigh the consequences of various actions, work through complexities and uncertainties, and come to a shared understanding of what is possible in terms of common action. Community media access can enhance this process by providing information on important issues, acting as a catalyst for civic involvement, and convening forums for public deliberation.

A recent example of how community access can become involved is the partnership between Americans Discuss Social Security (ADSS) and 24 access centers (identified at left). This endeavor, coordinated by a nonprofit organization for strengthening community capacity called The Learning Commons, involved the participation of access centers in a multi-city telecast on Social Security held October 10, 1998. The access organizations benefited by partnering in the cablecast of citizen engagement forums, linking local citizens with national policy makers, and enhancing the value of community access as a "public space" for substantive dialogue rather than divisive debate. While some centers only downlinked and cablecast the ADSS program, others developed feature programs and convened local forums. All of the access centers indicated an interest in future events as indicated by the following statements:

"The ADSS project is a wonderful example of a national organization using the network of Access stations to provide important information and services to local communities. We look forward to working with them again."

– Ron Cooper, Executive Director, ACCESS SACRAMENTO



Participants in ADSS Telecast

Access Sacramento
Arlington Community Television
Berkeley Community Media
Boston Neighborhood Network
Cambridge Community Television
Capital Community Television
Chittenden Community Television
Citizens Television
City of Erie Cable TV
Community Access Television (ND)
Davis Community Television
Gillette Public Access TV
Hillsborough Television
Lowell Telecommunications Corp.
Malden Access Television
Marin 31
Miami Valley Cable Council
Mid Peninsula Access Corporation
Multnomah Community Television
North Suburban Access Corporation
Portland Cable Access
Santa Rosa Community Media Access Center
Thurston Community Television
Tualatin Valley Community Access



"Our community access center has made it a priority to be a convener of people for dialogue about public issues. The October 10th event gave us a chance to build a partnership, live our mission regarding convening dialogue, and promote ourselves in the context of an important public need."

– Paula Manley, Executive Director, TVCA

"We think collaborating with ADSS was tremendously valuable because it gave us an opportunity to serve our community by providing information on an issue that affects everyone in our community. It also demonstrated that community television is a vital outlet for community dialogue on key issues."

– Lisa Ahorns, Executive Director, Marin 31

Access centers have the opportunity to participate in a future ADSS telecast on "Women, Gender Equity, and Social Security" scheduled for early 1999. In addition, there are other opportunities for access centers to create a "public space" for civic participation. Many national organizations can provide non-partisan materials on important social issues that affect every community. These materials can be used to inform subscribers, develop feature programs about key issues, and convene forums that involve deliberative dialogue between concerned citizens.

These organizations, and the issues they address in a non-partisan way, are described in the box located at right. Partnerships between community access centers and national organizations can demonstrate to local government funders the vital role that access centers can play in engaging citizens in public dialogue on critical issues. Activities of this type can also build a track record for access centers in community leadership and collaborative problem solving – a record that can provide evidence to legislators and policy makers that community access centers are a necessary "public space" for dialogue that strengthens our democracy.

Jim Floyd is a community development specialist completing his doctoral program in the College of Urban and Public Affairs at Portland State University. Specializations include public policy and dialogue, conflict resolution, and community building. He is associated with the Kettering Foundation and its network of individuals and organizations concerned with public deliberation. He is a national faculty member for National Issue Forums and has served as local faculty at the Pacific Northwest Public Policy Institute and the University of California-Davis Public Policy Institute. Jim is also active in Environmental Issues Forums (EIF) and conducts trainings and forums for EIF throughout the U.S. He currently resides in San Antonio, Texas. Contact him at (210) 240-8374 or JBFloydY2K@aol.com.

National Organizations

Alliance for National Renewal (ANR) ANR is an initiative of the National Civic League involving 200 organizations working to address serious issues facing America and its communities. ANR publishes a Directory of Alliance for National Renewal Partner Organizations and provides information on ways to become involved in the renewal effort. Contact Christine Benero, Director of Alliance for National Renewal, at (202) 783-2961 or email ncl@ncl.org.

Americans Discuss Social Security (ADSS) ADSS is a non-partisan effort, funded by The Pew Charitable trusts, to engage Americans in a national conversation about Social Security that informs policymakers. ADSS can provide a variety of materials to access centers including Discussion Starter Kits. Contact Carolyn J. Lukensmeyer, Executive Director, at (202) 955-900 or email cjl@adss.org.

Congressional Exchange (CX) CX is a project of the nonprofit Topsfield Foundation, Inc. dedicated to advancing deliberative democracy in the United States. Currently, CX publishes *Smart Talk for Growing Communities: Meeting the challenges of growth and development.* Contact Patrick L. Scully at (202) 393-1441 or email congex@congex.org.

Environmental Issues Forums (EIF) EIF is a program of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) based on the belief that citizens need to be involved in tackling today's environmental issues. EIF publications include *The Solid Waste Mess, The Wetlands Issue, Clean Water,* and *The Biodiversity Debate.* Contact the EIF Coordinator at NAAEE (202) 884-8914 or email ashotkin@aed.org.

National Issues Forums (NIF) NIF is a nonpartisan, nationwide network of locally sponsored forums for the consideration of public policy issues. Each year, NIF prepares publications that provide an overview of important national issues. Recent topics include The National Piggybank: Does Our Retirement System Need Fixing?, At Death's Door: What Are the Choices?, Our Nation's Kids: Is Something Wrong?, and Governing America: Our Choices, Our Challenge. Contact National Issues Forums Research at (800) 433-7834 or contact their web site at www.nifi.org.

Community Radio

A Glimpse into a Vitally Active World

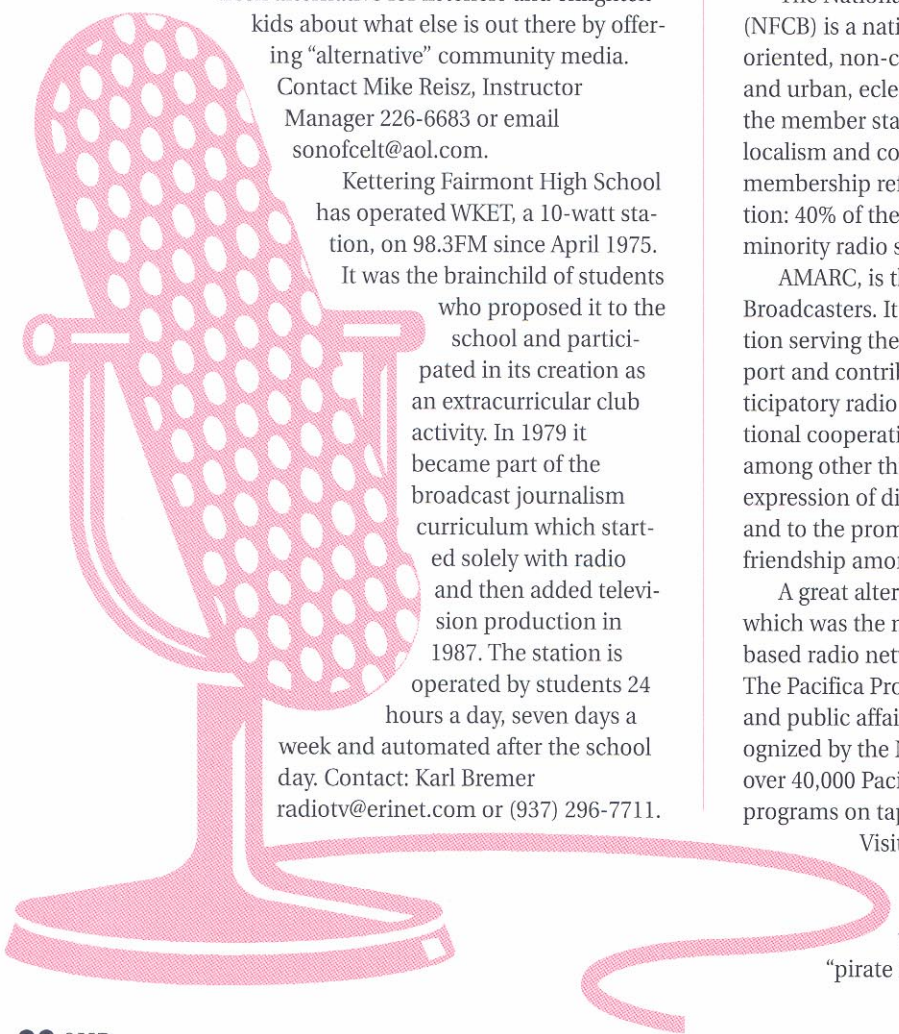
by Ric Hayes

This short article cannot fully do justice to the world-wide phenomena of community radio, but we wanted to provide a glimpse into this vitally active world.

Everyone knows that a large number of colleges and public schools operate radio stations as part of their academic curriculum. But did you know that in the Dayton, Ohio area there are colleges and high schools both operating broadcast radio stations?

Flyer Radio is the official student-run radio station of the University of Dayton. Broadcasting at 98.1 and 99.5 FM with the call letters WGXM-FM, Flyer Radio provides music, sports, news, public affairs and entertainment shows to University of Dayton students and to about 100,000 homes in the Miami River Valley area. See http://flyer-radio.udayton.edu or call (937) 229-2664.

The Dayton Public School system has operated WDPS for 23 years. Their 6,000 watt broadcast reaches throughout the Miami Valley. Students do most of the programming as part of the vocational studies at Patterson Career Center. Focus is not just radio, but general job and life skills. The goal is to provide a fresh alternative for listeners and enlighten kids about what else is out there by offering "alternative" community media. Contact Mike Reisz, Instructor Manager 226-6683 or email sonofcelt@aol.com.



Kettering Fairmont High School has operated WKET, a 10-watt station, on 98.3FM since April 1975. It was the brainchild of students who proposed it to the school and participated in its creation as an extracurricular club activity. In 1979 it became part of the broadcast journalism curriculum which started solely with radio and then added television production in 1987. The station is operated by students 24 hours a day, seven days a week and automated after the school day. Contact: Karl Bremer radiotv@erinet.com or (937) 296-7711.

Broadcast radio is a key means of communicating worldwide. There are a multitude of web sites that can link you with this international community. You might start with http://www.openchannel.se/, the Open Channel web site that includes international links related to the global movement for freedom of speech.

Visit www.wket.fm.net

Broadcast radio is a key means of communicating worldwide. There are a multitude of web sites that can link you with this international community. You might start with http://www.openchannel.se/, the Open Channel web site that includes international links related to the global movement for freedom of speech.

The National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) is a national membership organization of community-oriented, non-commercial radio stations. Large and small, rural and urban, eclectic or targeted toward specific communities, the member stations are distinguished by their commitment to localism and community participation and support. NFCB's membership reflects the true diversity of the American population: 40% of the members serve rural communities, and 34% are minority radio services. See http://www.nfcb.org

AMARC, is the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters. It is an international non-governmental organization serving the community radio movement. Its goal is to support and contribute to the development of community and participatory radio along the principals of solidarity and international cooperation. AMARC's Declaration of Principles states, among other things, that members of AMARC: contribute to the expression of different social, political and cultural movements, and to the promotion of all initiatives supporting peace and friendship among peoples. http://www.amarc.org

A great alternative programming source is Pacifica Radio, which was the nation's first listener-supported, community-based radio network, and has nearly 60 affiliates in 27 states. The Pacifica Program Service distributes award-winning arts and public affairs productions. The Pacifica Radio Archives, recognized by the National Archives for its unique holdings, offers over 40,000 Pacifica-originated and independently produced programs on tape for distribution to all public radio stations. Visit http://www.pacifica.org/

And don't forget the adventuresome spirit that leads individuals to start up their own private stations. These are often referred to as "pirate radio" and there is activity at the federal level

that may offer greater opportunity to those interested in do-it-yourself radio.

In 1998 the FCC opened hearings to re-examine its policy on radio station licensing. The FCC receives 13,000 inquiries annually from individuals and groups wishing to start "low power" or "micro power" radio stations. Although the FCC is re-examining their policies, they continue to close down unlicensed broadcast stations throughout the country. They advise all "remaining illegal, unlicensed stations to voluntarily cease their illegal broadcasting operations." Go to http://www.fcc.gov

Regardless of the efforts of the FCC to protect public safety pirate radio is alive and well. One group working on that endeavor is the Prometheus Project from Philadelphia. The group recently posted a notice on the Alliance Announce list that they will be traveling throughout the East Coast next year helping citizens join the "micro-radio" movement. Anyone wishing more information please respond by email to petetridish@hotmail.com, or anntennah@hotmail.com.

Internet radio has already shown signs that it will become a powerful tool allowing free expression for anyone linked to the net. Any good search engine will provide dozens of web sites about radio being delivered over the Internet. One site that may be a good place to start is http://wmbr.mit.edu/stations/list.html This site is maintained by Theodric Young at WMBR-FM. It lists over 7,500 sites on the Internet that publish information about broadcast radio stations. Mr. Young states "while there are several other extensive lists of radio stations available on the World Wide Web, this list is, to the best of our knowledge, the most comprehensive."

And of course there are many stations operated by public access or community media centers. The Access Sacramento story at right provides an example of this effort.

Ric Hayes is the Director of Cable Operations for the Miami Valley Cable Council, a council of governments serving eight municipalities in the suburbs south of Dayton Ohio. He is also the Vice-Chair of the Alliance for Community Media and works actively with the Central States region and the Ohio-Kentucky Chapter. To find out more about MVCC visit http://www.mvcc.net. Contact Ric at rhayes@mvcc.net or (937) 438-8887.



Community Radio Alive and Growing

by Shane Carpenter

Radio Coordinator, Access Sacramento

Local community radio is alive and growing in Sacramento California. Access Sacramento is host to two of the few public access cable radio stations in the country. For over 10 years, Sacramento County residents have produced and listened to a unique blend of musical styles and informative public affairs programs.

The Voice of Sacramento began in 1986 when Access Sacramento opened for business. By 1988, the stations cablecast round the clock. Two years later as many as 70 individual volunteers produced regular biweekly radio shows. We currently produce a weekly lineup with nearly 50 different shows.

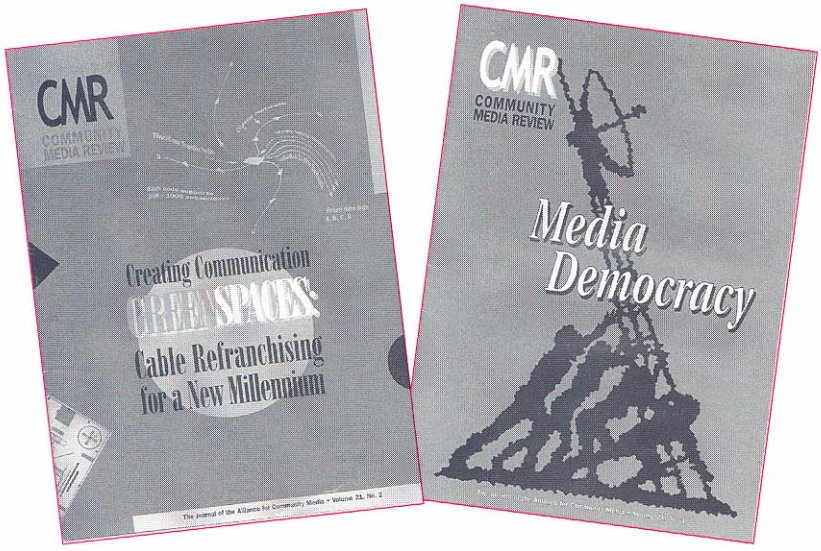
One can hear The Voice in a number of ways. We have two FM cable radio frequencies, the Community Use channel at 88.7 MHz., and the public access channel at 89.9 MHz. Last year we began sending our signal out to the world over the Internet via streaming audio. We currently 'netcast' from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Pacific Time) during the week. Check out our web site at www.sacramento.org/voice. The Voice is also carried on our public access cable television channel 74 under an interactive graphic bulletin board system.

In May 1998, Access Sacramento completed an agreement, two years in the making, with San Juan Unified School District which gives us access to the district's FM radio transmitter. We share the frequency with students from El Camino High School. The Voice simulcasts over KYDS 91.5 FM during the week from 5:00 PM to 7:00 AM and throughout the weekends, summer vacations and school holidays. KYDS broadcasts with an effective radiative power of 414 watts. The station reaches over 40 miles in any direction and serves the counties of Sacramento, Places, El Dorado, and Yolo. We at Access Sacramento are very pleased and encouraged by our new acquisition as it allows us to be heard throughout the greater Sacramento area. Listeners now can pick up The Voice on their Cars and carry our station with them without necessarily being tied to the cable or Internet feeds.

Probably the greatest asset Access Sacramento finds in The Voice is its air personalities. You will hear real folks presenting local programming with dedication and professionalism. Listeners continue to be won over by these volunteers and their programs. The future looks pretty bright for local community radio in Sacramento. The community will benefit as it binds together and rediscovers itself through our radio station. Access Sacramento will benefit also from our ability to promote events and cover live activities as they happen.

We are interested in networking with like minded access centers and individuals. If you would like more information about our operation, please feel free to contact me at Access Sacramento 4623 T St. Suite A, Sacramento CA 95819; by telephone at (916)456-8600 ext. 144 or by email at access_radio@bbs.macnexus.org

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Special thanks to:

- Malden Access Television, Malden, MA
- Central States Region of the Alliance
- Cincinnati Community Television, Cincinnati, OH
- Community Television Network, Ann Arbor, MI

for their generous support in providing additional copies of CMR's *Creating Communication Green Spaces: Cable Refranchising for a New Millennium* issue for mailing to members of the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA).

LIBRARIES

continued from page 22

shops through our computer center for staff. Reference on the Internet, Advanced Search Engines on the Internet, Basic Introduction to Netscape, Web Based Email, Pegasus Mail for Windows, Mechanics of Netscape, HTML Primer, MegaHTML, First Search Databases.

Children's Services has held numerous Internet workshops for children and parents on basic Internet skills and search engines. They have also given tips on how to avoid inappropriate material for children on the Internet.

A few nonprofit organizations have sponsored workshops for their groups, such as the Black Data Processing Associates of Fort Wayne, Inc. and Fort Wayne Women's Business Association. During the annual summer Three Rivers Festival the library has used the computer center as a highlight to a tour of the library for senior citizens. The workshops are a great use of the facility and we wish we could offer more.

We don't want to down play the importance of the individuals using the computer center. We average 80 individuals per day coming into the center. They vary in ages from 9 to 79 and socio-economic background is just as diverse. Some people come in with no experience on computers and then there are those who could teach us a few things. We usually get positive feedback about our center. People visiting Fort Wayne are impressed that they can come in and check their email or print off that important document for their business meeting. People who have lived in Fort Wayne all their life come in and are impressed that they have such a wealth of service right at their finger tips.

Overall the computer center has been a strong force in our goal to empower citizens, and community groups, by providing the resources necessary for them to gain access to produce and/or receive multi-media information over any public communication network.

Cathy C. Wise is Assistant Manager at Access Fort Wayne, Allen County Public Library, telephone (219)421-1249, email cwise@acpl.lib.in.us

Do all human beings have the right to see, to hear, to speak, to communicate and to access information regardless of their life circumstances, their political or religious beliefs or their ability to pay? We say 'Yes!' If you agree with us, join. . .

The Campaign for Media Democracy

What you can do:

❒ *Sign the Petition in Support of Media Democracy*

❒ *Support the Public Policy program of the Alliance — become a Public Policy Affiliate or Council member*

❒ *Write, call or visit your governmental representatives*

❒ *Write letters to the editor in support of media access or call in to a radio talk show and talk about the importance of media democracy*

❒ *Talk to your friends about the issue — speak to community groups or invite someone to speak to your group about media democracy*

❒ *Join an Alliance Chapter — Attend a Regional Conference — Become active in your Alliance!*

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